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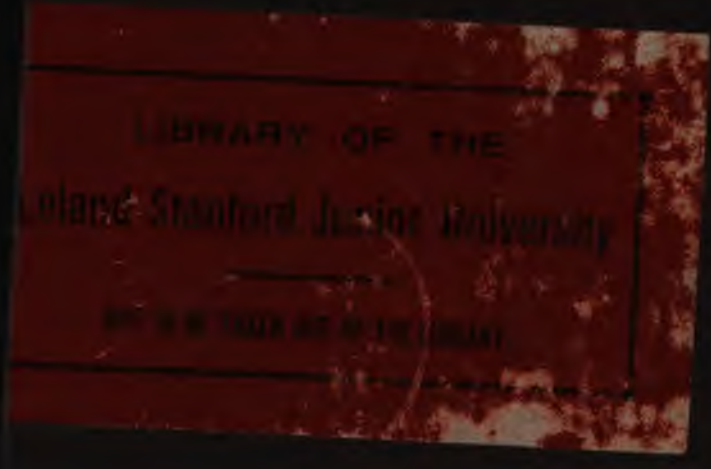

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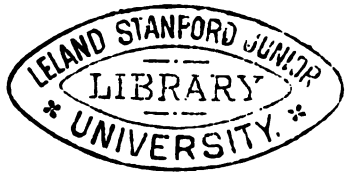

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THE WRITINGS OF

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

TO THE REV. DR. WILLIAM GORDON.

WEST POINT, 2 August, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

Your favor of the 22d ult. came to my hands by the last Post, and receives, as it deserves, my warmest thanks.—I have also to acknowledge myself your debtor for another letter of the 15th of Decemr., which the number I am obliged to write and read, with other papers to consider, prevented my answering till it had slipped my memory wholly.

The assault of Stoney Point does much honor to the Troops employed in it, as no men could behave better. They were composed of the light Infantry of every State (now in this part of the army) commanded by Genl. Wayne, a brave, gallant and sensible officer. Had it not been for some untoward accidents, the stroke would have been quite compleat. The plan was equally laid for Verplank's point, and would most assuredly have succeeded, but for delays, partly occasioned by high winds, and partly by means which were more unavoidable.—A combination, however, of causes produced such a delay as gave the enemy time to move in force, and render further ope-

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON, GOVERNOR OF VIRGINIA.[1]

WEST POINT, 6 August, 1779.

SIR,

I have been honored with your Letter of the 17 of July, upon the case of Lt.-Governor Hamilton. This subject, on more mature consideration, appears to be involved in greater difficulty than I apprehended. When I first received the proceedings of the Council upon it, transmitted in your Excellency's Letter of the 19th of June, I had no doubt of the propriety of the treatment decreed against Mr. Hamilton, as being founded in principles of a just retaliation. But, upon examining the matter more minutely, and consulting with several intelligent General Officers, it seems to be their opinion, that Mr. Hamilton could not, according to the usage of war, after his capitulation even in the manner it was made, be subjected to any uncommon severity under that idea, and that the capitulation placed him upon a different footing from a mere prisoner at discretion.

Whether it may be expedient to continue him in his present confinement from motives of policy, and to satisfy our people, is a question I cannot determine; but if it should, I would take the liberty to suggest, that it may be proper to publish all the cruelties he has committed or abetted, in a particular manner, and the evidence in support of the charges, that the World, holding his conduct in abhorrence, may feel and approve the justice of his fate. Indeed,

[1] Thomas Jefferson had been chosen Governor of Virginia on the 1st of June, as successor to Patrick Henry.

whatever may be the line of conduct towards him, this may be advisable. If, from the considerations I have mentioned, the rigor of his treatment is mitigated, yet he cannot claim of right upon any ground the extensive indulgence, which Genl. Phillips seems to expect for him; and I should not hesitate to withhold from him a thousand privileges I might allow to common prisoners. He certainly merits a discrimination; and, altho the practice of war may not justify all the measures, that have been taken against him, he may unquestionably, without any breach of public faith or the least shadow of imputation, be confined to a Room. His safe custody will be an object of great importance. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

P. S. Augt. 10— I have received your Excellency's Letter of the 19th of July with the Blank Commissions which I will use as the Council requests.

[1] Henry Hamilton had been for several years Lieutenant-Governor of Detroit and the British dependencies in that region. On the 24th of February he had resigned himself, and a party of troops under his command, prisoners of war by capitulation to Colonel Clark, of Virginia, who, by a spirited and well-conducted enterprise, had passed through the wilderness at the head of a detachment from that State, and invested Fort St. Vincent's, in the Illinois country, where Governor Hamilton was then stationed. He and several other prisoners were sent to Virginia. It appeared by papers laid before the Council of the State, that Governor Hamilton had issued proclamations and approved of practices, which were marked with cruelty towards the people that fell into his hands, such as inciting the Indians to bring in scalps, putting prisoners in irons, and giving them up to be the victims of savage barbarity. The Council decided, that Governor Hamilton was a proper subject for retaliation, and that he should be put in irons and confined in a jail. The British general Phillips, who was then at Charlottesville with the convention troops, wrote a long and temperate letter on the subject to Governor Jefferson, arguing, upon military principles, that this treatment of Governor Hamilton could not be justified,

TO SAMUEL PURVIANCE.

WEST POINT, 7 August, 1779.

SIR,

Every information which is in my power to give respecting the several queries contained in your letter of the 13th ulto. (received yesterday only) shall be communicated, and I wish a better knowledge and more perfect recollection of circumstances would enable me to give you a more satisfactory answer.

In what manner the person who makes you the offer of land derives *his* title, I am totally ignorant; but the several conveyances from the original patentee will, and only can speak to the validity of it. If this is part of the land conveyed under a proclamation issued by the governor and council of Virginia, in the year 1754, and has been properly transferred to the present proprietor, and the conditions of an act

even if the charges against him were true. Had he been captured, or had he surrendered at discretion, General Phillips acknowledged, that he would have been at the mercy of his enemies; but since he had capitulated upon honorable terms, which were signed in the usual form by both parties, he could not be made accountable for alleged previous misdemeanors, without the violation of a compact, which had always been considered sacred by civilized nations.

Governor Jefferson, who said that "he had the highest idea of the sacredness of those contracts, which take place between nation and nation at war, and would be the last on earth, who should do any thing in violation of them," represented the matter fully to General Washington, and asked his advice. The above letter was written in reply, and Governor Hamilton's confinement was mitigated accordingly. It is but justice to General Phillips to say, since he had made himself somewhat odious by his correspondence and deportment at Cambridge, that his letter to Governor Jefferson on this occasion was highly honorable to him, both on the score of the temper and sentiments it exhibited, and the moderation and courtesy with which it was written.—*Sparks.*

Jefferson wrote to the Governor of Detroit a letter of exceeding interest, defending his treatment of Hamilton. It will be found in *Calendar of Virginia State Papers*, i., 321.

of assembly requiring certain improvements to be made in a limited period, have been complied with, or in other words, if no person has taken advantage of the non-compliance with this act, and petitioned for the land, the title must be good, because the land was offered by the executive powers of Virginia (in whom sufficient authority was vested) as a bounty to encourage an expedition then on foot against the encroachments of the French on the Ohio; and patents issued in legal form accordingly, after peace was restored to the frontiers. There can be little doubt therefore of the goodness of the title (under the provisos before mentioned,) and how far a non compliance with the act for improving and saving lands would have an operation, considering the distracted state in which that country hath been, the hostile temper of the Indians, and their unwillingness to have these lands settled may be a matter of doubt. Unwilling, however, to place mine upon a precarious footing, I did at great expense and risque send out servants (bought at Baltimore) and Slaves, and saved mine in the manner prescribed by law. So may those also who are now offering to sell, for aught I know to the contrary.

Thus much, Sir, respecting the title to these lands, with regard to the quality of them, I have only to add, I believe it is good. I was not present at the survey of a single acre, but had a superficial view of the whole of them the year before they were surveyed, gave general directions to the surveyor respecting his conduct, and have reason to believe he

included no land that was bad. By the description of the lands offered to you, they must be part of a large tract of between 50 and 60,000 acres lying in the fork of the Ohio and great Kanhaway, patented (if my memory serves me) in the names of Muse, Stephen, Lewis, Hogg, West, and others, and afterwards divided among them according to their respective claims, or agreeable to some kind of compromise entered into by mutual consent. But this is a transaction of which I never had any official knowledge, and have come at by report only; nor do I know (as hath been before observed) in what manner, to whom, or with what accuracy, transfers have been made; but the title passed will discover this. Of the validity of the original patent, I have not the smallest doubt. With esteem & regard

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, WEST POINT,
15 August, 1779.

SIR:

In the letter which I had the honor of addressing your Excellency the 6th instant I promised a state of facts to shew that every thing in my power has been done to give success to the Western expedition. I am sorry to find in the appeal which General Sullivan has made to Congress that he has misstated several particulars of importance, and that in providing for his own justification in case of misfortune, he has left the matter upon such a footing as to place me in a

delicate situation. In justice to myself I beg leave to make a few remarks on the different parts of his letter.

He says in the first place "that the plan for carrying on the expedition was not agreeable to his mind, nor were the number of Men for it sufficient in his opinion to insure success."

The plan he proposed was to have two bodies, each superior to the whole force of the enemy to operate both on the Mohawk River, and by way of the Susquehannah—This Plan might have been desirable if the number of our troops, the state of our finances, and of supplies had permitted its execution, but it was impracticable on all these accounts. The force actually detached left the Army so weak that I am persuaded every officer of reflection in it, who knew our true circumstances was uneasy for the consequences; and if a larger force had gone, we should have been absolutely at the discretion of the enemy. This will immediately appear from a recurrence to the Returns of the Army at that time. Should we have endeavored to make up the deficiency from the Militia, our experience of the success of the applications which were made will convince us that the attempt would have been fruitless; to say nothing of the injury to agriculture which would have resulted from calling out so large a body of Militia. But if the men could have been procured we should have failed in supplies. This is evident from what has happened. If we have met with so many difficulties, disappointments, and delays in providing for the

present force, how would it have been possible to have provided for *double the number ?*

But though, if our resources had permitted, it might have been *convenient* to have had two bodies, each superior to the enemy's whole force to operate in different directions for the sake of dispatch, yet this does not appear to me, on military principles, to have been necessary to insure success : For, as the object was only the destruction of some Indian Settlements, all that could be requisite to its execution was to be able to march through them, and this purpose was assured if there was at one capital point a force sufficient to beat their collective force.

General Sullivan seemed to prefer the carrying on the principal operation by the Mohawk River. My reasons for preferring the other route are contained in the letter No. 3 to General Schuyler. General Schuyler was originally of the same opinion, as appears by his letters No 1 and 2, but he changed it upon hearing the reasons in favor of the plan which has been adopted, as he acknowledges in his letter No. 4 ; where he also suggests an additional motive, the want of Provisions. General Sullivan relinquishes the former plan himself on this principle, nor did the deficiency arise from the want of previous dispositions, but from the difficulties in procuring supplies. It was my own idea at first, as will be seen by several letters herewith, to carry on the principal operation by the Mohawk, and directions were given very early to form Magazines for this purpose which it seems could not be executed. But if this obstacle had not

existed, the reasons for penetrating by way of Susquehannah were then, and still are in my opinion, conclusive. The information on which the facts stated in my letter to General Schuyler, were founded is, principally contained in the summary No. 16 Packet No. 7. The experiment hitherto hath confirmed its truth.

General Sullivan says that his letters to me produced no other effect than to change the route of Clinton's detachment. There are only four points on which his letters turn. One is the having two bodies of superior force to the whole strength of the Enemy to operate different ways.—I have assigned reasons to shew that a compliance with this was impracticable, and General Sullivan's own concession on the score of provisions is an admission of its impracticability.

Another is, the force necessary to compose the main body,—This he estimates at three thousand—It will be seen by my letter No. 3, Packet 1st, that my opinion long before corresponded with his idea; and the calculations made at the time, of the Corps intended for the service, including the aid solicited from Pennsylvania, induced me to believe General Sullivan's force would have amounted to about this number. The situation of our troops continually mouldering in a variety of ways—the disappointment in the expected reinforcement from Pennsylvania, and the unlooked for demands from a want of hands in the Quarter Master's department have occasioned his force to be considerably less than was intended, or could have been foreseen: That he has not been gratified

in this respect was not for want of my wishes or endeavors, and is as great a disappointment to me as him. He acknowledges that more Continental troops could not be spared—the Militia applied for were not furnished.

The next point is—a change in the route of the Troops under General Clinton. This he confesses happened as he desired ; yet it would have been much against my judgment had his main body been so large as it was intended to be. I fear too, as matters have turned out, the most critical part of the expedition will be the junction of these two Corps. But it appears to me now from Genl. Sullivan's representation that he could not avoid giving the order to Clinton to march with a full supply of provisions.

The last point is—a change of the Corps originally destined for the Expedition. In this also he was indulged. The precise Corps he requested are with him ; though I was not satisfied of the validity of his reason for desiring a change, as I believe very few more of the troops now with him have been accustomed to the Indian mode of fighting than of those who were first intended. I had two motives for fixing on the Pennsylvania troops: one was, that I should have been happy an officer of General St. Clair's abilities had been second in command to take the direction in case of accidents to the first ; General Sullivan by this change reduced his numbers four hundred men, which could not be replaced without breaking in upon other Corps. On the part of Genl. Sullivan's letter which related to the Quarter Master

and Commissaries' department I shall only observe that there have no doubt been very great delays—whether these have proceeded in part from a want of exertion, or wholly from the unavoidable impediments which the unhappy state of our currency opposes at every step, I have not sufficient information to determine: but from the approved capacity, attention, and assiduity with which the operations of these departments are conducted I am inclined to make every allowance, and to impute our disappointments to the embarrassments of the times, and not to neglect. Genl. Sullivan's well known activity will not permit me to think he has not done every thing in his power to forward the preparations; but however the delays may have happened I flatter myself no part of the blame can fall upon me. The papers contained in packet No. 2 will shew that the necessary orders were given by me, and that I was encouraged to expect their timely accomplishment. Besides what is upon record, my pressing and repeated entreaties were employed with the Quarter Master and Commissary General in personal conferences. My attention was so much directed to this Expedition that I suspended at a very critical period the necessary preparations for the main Army, to give the greater vigor and efficacy to those for that object.—To this effect were my Instructions to the Quarter Master General when we had the strongest inducements to put ourselves in a moving posture.

General Sullivan in the next place says, "having been taught by repeated disappointments to be

cautious, I early gave orders to Genl. Clinton to supply his Troops with three months' Provisions, and wrote Governor Clinton for his assistance in April last—This has been done and they are supplied."

The idea here held up is really extraordinary. My letter to General Schuyler No 1 will shew that as early as the beginning of December Magazines were ordered to be formed in that Quarter for 10.000 men with a view to an expedition to Niagara—By the subsequent letters to him No 2 & 3 these were partly discontinued and limited to the Plan of an Indian Expedition, the extent of which was to be governed by his judgment of the force necessary. This being 3000 men, the preparations were of course for that number. Schenectedy was afterwards made the depository by Genl. Clinton, as appears by his letter No 5—in answer to mine No. 4. From the whole tenor of the correspondence on the subject, Congress will clearly perceive, that the Magazines which Genl. Sullivan ascribes to his care and caution were formed in consequence of orders given several months before he was nominated to the command, which did not take place till the 6th of March, by letter; and that they would have been equal to the supply of 3000 men had not the resources of the country fallen short.

General Sullivan states his force at 2312 rank and file, which by a variety of deductions he afterwards reduced to 938 which he holds up as his combatting force.—

I should be unwilling to overrate the means of any

officer, or to create a greater responsibility than is just—But at the same time I think it a duty I owe to the public and myself to place a matter of this kind in a true point of light. If almost the whole of the 2,300 men are not effectually serviceable in action, it must be Genl. Sullivan's own fault—nearly all the men he speaks of, as Pack Horsemen, Bat Horsemen, &c., &c may be to the full as useful as any others. The number he mentions is only necessary for the sake of dispatch on a march; in time of action the horses and cattle may be committed to the care of a very few, and the rest may be at liberty to act as occasion requires. Should he even be attacked on a march those animals may be made a shelter, rather than an incumbrance—If the operations he is to be concerned in were the regular ones of the field, his calculation would be better founded; but in the loose irregular war he is to carry on, it will naturally lead to error and misconception. General Sullivan makes no account of his Drummers and Fifers, and other appendages of an army who do not compose the fighting part of it—I have too good an opinion of his judgment not to believe he would find very useful employment for them. These and the few drivers and pack horsemen whom he acknowledges to have, will be nearly if not quite sufficient with a small guard to take care of his horses and cattle in time of action. But as I before observed, his *real* force will be less than it ought to be, to put him out of the reach of contingencies; but I hope with prudent management it will still suffice. The estimate made by Genl.

Schuyler of the enemy's force from every subsequent information was not too low; and it is to be hoped the want of provisions will prevent its being exerted in a vigorous and formidable opposition. My chief solicitude is for Genl. Clinton, if he effects the meditated junction there will in my opinion be nothing to fear afterwards.[1] Notwithstanding what may be said of the expertness of Indians in the woods, I am strongly persuaded our troops will always be an overmatch for them with equal numbers, except in case of surprise or ambuscade, which it is at our own option to avoid.

General Sullivan also makes the application to the State of Pennsylvania *a consequence of his letters.* My letter No 1 to his Excellency the President will shew that this was a part of the plan before General Sullivan was nominated to the command; and my subsequent letters will shew that I pressed a compliance in the strongest and most pointed manner.

He mentions among other things that "one third of his Men are without a shirt to their backs." The letters No 1 to 5 Packet 5th will make it appear that I took every step in my power to afford a competent supply, and I have the greatest reason to believe that the Troops with him had more than a proportion to the general wants and supplies of the Army.

The Packet No. 6 contains my instructions from time to time to Genl. Sullivan, No. 7 the intelligence received from first to last, and No. 8 sundry papers relative to the expedition which do not immediately

[1] Clinton joined Sullivan at Tioga on August 22d.

affect the subjects of the present letter, but all which may serve to shew that I have paid all the attention in my power to this important object, and made use of every precaution for its success. I hope the event may answer our wishes; but if it should not, my anxiety to stand justified in the opinion of Congress has induced me to give them the trouble of this lengthy communication—I most sincerely thank them for the opportunity they have afforded me of entering into this explanation by the transmission of General Sullivan's letter, and I shall be much obliged by a similar indulgence upon every occasion of the same sort.

I beg leave to conclude with one observation. It may possibly hereafter be said that the expedition ought not to have been undertaken unless the means were fully adequate, or that the consequences of a defeat ought not to have been hazarded when they were found to be otherwise—The motives to the undertaking, besides the real importance of rescuing the frontier from the alarms, ravages, and distresses to which it was exposed and which in all probability have redoubled this year,—were the increasing clamors of the country, and the repeated applications of the States immediately concerned, supported by frequent references and indications of the pleasure of Congress. The combined force of these motives appeared to me to leave no alternative.

The means proposed to be employed were fully sufficient; the disappointments we have met with, such as could not have been foreseen as we have no right

to expect—so far as the business did not depend on me I had the strongest assurances from those who were concerned, and who were to be supposed the proper judges that my expectations would be fulfilled.

After such extensive preparations has been made—so much expence incurred,—the attention and hopes of the public,—the apprehensions of the enemy excit[ed]—[their] force augmented—their resentments infla[med]—to recede, and leave the frontier a prey [to] their depredations would be in every view impolitic, when there is still a good prospect of success. To avoid possible misfortunes we must in this case submit to many certain evils—of the most serious nature, too obvious to require enumeration. * * *[1]

I have the honor, &c.

TO DR. JOHN COCHRAN, SURGEON-GENERAL.

WEST-POINT, 16 August, 1779.

DR. DOCTR.,

I have asked Mrs. Cochran & Mrs. Livingston to dine with me to-morrow; but am I not in honor bound to apprize them of their fare? As I hate deception, even where the imagination only is concerned; I will. It is needless to premise, that my table is large enough to hold the ladies. Of this they had ocular proof yesterday. To say how it is usually covered, is rather more essential; and this shall be the purport of my Letter.

[1] Referred to Mr. Atlee, Mr. Armstrong, Mr. Spencer, Mr. Dickinson, and Mr. Mathews.

Since our arrival at this happy spot, we have had a ham, (sometimes a shoulder) of Bacon, to grace the head of the Table; a piece of roast Beef adorns the foot; and a dish of beans, or greens, (almost imperceptible,) decorates the center. When the cook has a mind to cut a figure, (which I presume will be the case to-morrow,) we have two Beef-steak pyes, or dishes of crabs, in addition, one on each side the center dish, dividing the space & reducing the distance between dish & dish to about 6 feet, which without them would be near 12 feet apart. Of late he has had the surprising sagacity to discover, that apples will make pyes; and its a question, if, in the violence of his efforts, we do not get one of apples, instead of having both of Beef-steaks. If the ladies can put up with such entertainment, and will submit to partake of it on plates, once Tin but now Iron—(not become so by the labor of scouring), I shall be happy to see them; and am, dear Doctor, yours, &c.

TO LUND WASHINGTON.

[EXTRACT.]

WEST POINT, 17 August, 1779.

Some time ago (but how long I cannot remember) you applied to me to know if you should receive payment of Genl. Mercer's Bonds, and of the bond due from the deceased Mr. Mercer's estate to me; and was, after animadverting a little upon the subject, authorized to do so.—Of course I presume the money has been received.—I have since considered this mat-

ter in every point of view my judgment enables me to place it, and am resolved to receive no more old debts (such I mean as were contracted and ought to have been paid before the war) at the present nominal value of the money, unless compelled to it, or it is the practice of others to do it. Neither justice, reason, nor policy requires it. The law undoubtedly was well designed. It was intended to stamp a value, and give a free circulation to, the paper bills of credit; but it never was nor could have been intended to make a man take a shilling or sixpence in the pound for a just debt, wch. he is well able to pay, and thereby involve'g himself in ruin. I am as willing now, as I ever was, to take paper money for *every* kind of debt, and at its present depreciated value for those debts, which have been contracted since the money became so; but I will not in future receive the nominal sum for such old debts as come under the above description, except as before excepted.

The fear of injuring, by any example of mine, the credit of our paper currency, if I attempted to discriminate between the real and nominal value of Paper money, has already sunk me a large Sum, if the bonds before mentd. are paid off; the advantage taken in doing which no man of honor or common honesty can reconcile to his own feelings and conscience; not as it respects me, do I mean, but transactions of this kind generally. The thing which induces me to mention the matter to you at present is, the circumstance you have related respecting the wages of Roberts, which you say, (according to his

demands,) will amount to upwards of £2000, and comes to as much for the Service of a *Common* miller for one year only, as I shall get for 600 acres of land sold Mercer in the best of times and in the most valuable part of Virginia, that ought to have been pd. for before the money began to depreciate; nay, years before the war. This is such a manifest abuse of reason and justice that no arguments can reconcile it to common sense or common honesty. Instead of appealing to me, who have not the means of informatn., or knowledge of common usage and practice in matters of this kind in the State, or the Laws that govern there, I wish you would consult men of honor, honesty, and firm attachment to the cause, and govern yourself by their advice, or by yr. conduct. If it be customary with others to receive money in this way, that is, 6*d* or 1/ in the pound for old debts; if it is thought to be advancive of the great cause we are embarked in for individuals to do so, thereby ruining themselves while others are reaping the benefit of such distress; if the Law imposes this, and it is thought right to submit, I will not say aught against or oppose another word to it. No man has, nor no man will go, further to serve the Public than myself. If sacrificing my whole Estate would effect any valuable purpose, I would not hesitate one moment in doing it. But my submitting to matters of this kind, unless it is done so by others, is no more than a drop in the bucket. In fact, it is not serving the public, but enriching individuals, and countenancing dishonesty; for sure I am, that no honest man would attempt to pay 20/

with one, or perhaps half of one. In a word, I had rather make a present of the Bonds, than receive payment of them in so shameful a way. I am, &c.

TO PRESIDENT REED.

WEST POINT, 22 August, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Tilghman delivered me your favor of the 8th Instant, for which, and the favorable sentiments expressed of me in your publication addressed to the printer of the *Maryland Journal*, you will permit me to offer my grateful acknowledgements. The loss of Fort Washington, simply abstracted from the circumstances which attended it, was an event that gave me much pain, because it deprived the army of the services of many valuable men at a critical period, and the public of many valuable lives, by the cruelties which were inflicted upon them in their captive state. But this concern received additional poignancy from two considerations, which were but little known; one of them never will be known to the world, because I shall never attempt to palliate my own foibles by exposing the error of another; nor indeed could either of them come before the public, unless there had been such a charge, as must have rendered an inquiry into the causes of this miscarriage necessary. The one was a non-compliance in General Greene with an order sent to him from White Plains, before I marched for the western side of Hudson's River, to withdraw the artillery, stores, &c., from the Fort; al-

lowing him, however, some latitude for the exercise of his own judgment, as he was upon the spot, and could decide better from appearances and circumstances than I, the propriety of a total evacuation.[1] The other was a Resolve of Congress, in the emphatic words following;

"Friday, *October 11th*, 1776.—Resolved, that General Washington be desired, if it be practicable, by every art and whatever expense, to obstruct effectually the navigation of the North River, between Fort Washington and Mount Constitution, as well to prevent the regress of the enemy's Frigates lately gone up, as to hinder them from receiving succours."

When I came to Fort Lee, and found no measures taken for an evacuation, in consequence of the order aforementioned; when I found General Greene, of whose judgment and candor I entertained a good opinion, decidedly opposed to it; when I found other opinions coinciding with his; when the wishes of Congress to obstruct the navigation of the North River, and which were delivered in such forcible terms to me, recurred; when I knew that the easy communication between the different parts of the army, then separated by the river, depended upon it; and, lastly, when I considered that our policy led us to waste the campaign without coming to a general action on the one hand, or to suffer the enemy to overrun the country on the other, I conceived that every impediment, which stood in their way, was a mean to answer these purposes;—and when thrown

[1] Vol. V., p. 9.

into the scale of those opinions, which were opposed to an evacuation, caused that warfare in my mind, and hesitation, which ended in the loss of the garrison ; and, being repugnant to my own judgment of the advisability of attempting to hold the Post, filled me with the greater regret. The two great causes, which led to this misfortune, (and which I have before recited,) as well perhaps as my reasoning upon it, which occasioned the delay, were concealed from public view, of course left the field of censure quite open for any and every laborer, who inclined to work in it; and afforded a fine theme for the pen of a malignant writer, who is always less regardful of facts than the point he wants to establish, where he has the field wholly to himself, and where concealment of a few circumstances will answer his purpose, or where a small transposition of them will give a very different complexion to the same transaction.

Why I have run into such a lengthy discussion of this point, at this time, I am at a loss myself to tell. I meant but to touch it *en passant;* but one idea succeeded another, till it would seem, that I had been preparing my defence for a regular charge.

My ideas of what seems to be the only mode left to keep our Battalions to their establishment, or near it, you are already acquainted with, as they were conveyed at large to the Comee. at Valley Forge in '78. I have seen no cause since to change my opinion on this head, but abundant reason to confirm me in it. No man dislikes short and temporary enlistments more than I do. No man ever had greater cause to

reprobate and even curse the fatal policy of the measure than I have; Nor, no man (with decency) ever opposed it more, in the early part of this contest; and, had my advice respecting this matter been pursued, in the years seventy five and six, our money would have been upon a very different establishment, in point of credit, to what it is at this day, as we should have saved millions of pds. in bounty money, and the consequent evils of expiring armies and new levies. But those hours are passed, never to be recalled. Such men as compose the bulk of an army are in a different train of thinking and acting to what they were in the early stages of the war; and nothing is now left for it but an annual and systematic mode of drafting, which, while we retain the stamina of an army, (engaged for the war,) will be the best. Indeed, I see no other substitute for voluntary enlistments. In fact it will come to this; for there are people enow, (old soldiers,) who will hire as substitutes, and the difference will be, that, instead of the public's emitting or borrowing money to pay their bounties, (which is enlarged greatly every new enlistment,) these sums will be paid by individuals, will increase the demand for circulating cash, and, as with all other commodities in demand, raise the value of it by multiplying the means of its use. How far those governments, which are rent and weakened by intestine divisions, have energy enough to carry statutes of this nature into execution, I do not pretend to be a competent judge; but such as are well established and organized I am sure can do it. Those that are

not, the propriety of the measure is so necessary and obvious, that I should entertain little doubt of their success in the experiment.

The sponge, which you say some gentlemen have talked of using, unless there can be a discrimination, and proper saving clauses provided, (and how far this is practicable I know not,) would be unjust and impolitic in the extreme. Perhaps I do not understand what they mean by using the sponge. If it be to sink the money in the hands of the holders of it, and at their loss, it cannot in my opinion be justified upon any principles of common policy, common sense, or common honesty. But how far a man, for instance, who has possessed himself of 20 paper dollars by means of one, or the value of one, in specie, has a just claim upon the public for more than one of the latter in redemption, and in that ratio according to the periods of depreciation, I leave to those, who are better acquainted with the nature of the subject, and have more leizure than I have, to discuss. To me a measure of this kind appears substantial justice to the public and each individual; but whether it is capable of administration, I have never thought enough of it to form any opinion. We have given the enemy another little stroke at Powles hook—an acct. of which is transmitted to Congress by this conveyance and will I presume he handed to the public—in the mean while I have the pleasure to inform you that abt. 160 prisoners and the colors of the Garrison were brought off.

I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, WEST POINT,
23 August, 1779.

SIR,

I have the honor to enclose your Excellency Major Lee's report of the surprise & capture of the garrison of Powles Hook.[1] The Major displayed a remarkable degree of prudence, address, enterprise, and bravery, upon this occasion, which does the highest honor to himself and to all the officers and men under his command. The situation of the post rendered the attempt critical and the success brilliant. It was made in consequence of information, that the garrison was in a state of negligent security, which the event has justified. I am much indebted to Major-Genl. Lord Stirling for the judicious measures he took to forward the enterprise, and to secure the retreat of the party. Lieutenant McCalester, who will have the honor of delivering these despatches, will present Congress with the standard of the garrison, which fell into his possession during the attack. Major Lee speaks of this gentleman's conduct in the handsomest terms. I have the honor to be, &c.[2]

[1] As early as August 9th Major Lee had submitted to Washington a plan for attacking Paulus Hook, based upon a suggestion of Washington; but the measure had been postponed as involving too much risk.

[2] Read in Congress, August 27th. Referred to Paca, Atlee, and Dickinson.

"I have received your report of the attack of Powles Hook, transmitted by Capt. Rudolph, which I have forwarded to Congress by Lieutenant McCalester. I shall be sorry if this should be contrary to your wish, or Capt. Rudolph's expectation, as I have the best opinion of this gentleman's merit. My motives for sending Lieutenant McCalester with the despatches were, that he commanded one of the *forlorn hopes*, and got possession of the standard. As custom required the sending this to Congress, I thought the bearer of it

P. S. The report not having been received till this day, prevented a speedier transmission. Major Lee mentions twenty men lost on our side. Capt. Rudolph informs, that, since the report was concluded, several of the missing had returned, which will lessen the supposed loss near one-half.

TO JOHN PARKE CUSTIS.

DEAR SIR : WEST POINT, 24 August, 1779.

In answer to your letter of the 11th inst :—I candidly acknowledge I am at a loss what advice to give you, with precision, respecting the sale of your estate

ought to be the person, who had the good fortune to gain possession of it, especially as you had forwarded it by him to me ; nor would it have been warranted by precedent to send one with the despatches, and another with the standard. You will find my sense of your conduct, and of the officers & men under your command, expressed in the general order of yesterday, and my letter to Congress. I congratulate you on your success."—*Washington to Major Henry Lee*, 23 August, 1779.

"I have been duly favored with your letter of the 19th, written at 9 o'clock A.M., and that of the same date, of 1 o'clock P.M., containing the agreeable information of Major Lee's having succeeded against Powles Hook. I join my congratulations with your Lordship's on this occasion, and thank you for the effectual assistance afforded in completing the enterprise. The increase of confidence, which the army will derive from this affair and that at Stony point, I flatter myself, tho' great, will be among the least of the advantages resulting from these events.

"As the enemy must feel himself disgraced by these losses, they may endeavor to lessen it by a retaliation in kind. It is natural to expect his attempts on such parts of the enemy as lye most exposed. This sentiment, I make no doubt, has occurred to your Lordship, and will of course proportion your vigilance to the nature of your situation, and the danger which may be apprehended. I have this moment received your letter of the 20th. Your Lordship will be pleased to give my thanks to the officers and troops concerned in the capture of the garrison at Powles Hook, for their good conduct and gallant behavior on the occasion. The commissary of prisoners is directed to attend, and receive the British prisoners."—*Washington to Major-General Lord Stirling*, 21 August, 1779.

upon the eastern shore; but, upon the whole, in the present uncertain state of things, should, were I in your place, postpone the measure a while longer.

Your own observation must have convinced you of the rapid depreciation of the paper currency in the course of the last ten months, and this it will continue to do till there is a stop put to further emissions, and till some vigorous measures are adopted by the states respectively and collectively to lessen the circulating medium. You must be sensible that it is not forty thousand pounds, nor four hundred thousand, nor any nominal sum whatever, that would give you the value of the land in Northampton. Instance your unfortunate sale of the York estate to Colonel Braxton for twenty thousand pounds, which, I suppose, would now fetch one hundred thousand pounds, and unless, for the purpose of speculating in that or some other article, this sum, I am persuaded, would be refused by that gentleman. The present profit of your land on the Eastern shore may be trifling,—nay, I will admit that at this time, it is an encumbrance to you,—but still it retains in itself an intrinsic and real value, which rises nominally in proportion to the depreciation, and will always be valuable, if, (admitting the worst) the money should cease to pass. But, though the event is not probable, I will suppose that to be the case, or that it should continue to depreciate, as it has done, for the last ten months, where are you then? Bereft of your land, and in possession of a large sum of money that will neither buy victuals nor clothes—

There are but two motives which ought, and, I trust, can induce you to sell; the one is to invest the

money in the purchase of something else of equal value immediately; the other, to place it in the public funds. If the first is your object, I have no hesitation in giving my opinion in favor of the sale; because lands at so great a distance from you never will be profitable, and your only consideration is to be careful in your bargains elsewhere, making the prices of the thing sold and the things bought correspond with respect to times and places. In fact, this is but another name for barter or exchange; but, when the other is your inducement, the whole matter turns upon the credit and appreciation of the money, and these again upon financing, loans, taxes, war, peace, good success, bad success, the arts of designing men, mode of redemption, and other contingent events, which, in my judgment, very few men see far enough into to justify a capital risk; consequently you would be playing a hazardous, and possibly, in the issue, a ruinous game, for the chance of having sold at the turn of the tide, as it were, when there is not much fear of foregoing this advantage by any sudden appreciation of our money. In a word, by holding your land a few months longer, you can only lose the taxes; by selling, to place the money in the fund, you may lose considerably. Selling to buy, as I have before said, I consider as an exchange only; but then both bargains should be made at the same time. This was my advice to you before, and I now repeat it; otherwise the purchases you have in contemplation may rise fifty per cent. between your sale and the final accomplishment of them.

I observe what you say also respecting payment of your old bonds, and have less scruple in giving it to you as my opinion that you are not bound, in honor or by any principle of reason or love to your country, to accept payment of such as are upon demand, and were given previous to the contest and to the depreciation of the money at the present nominal value of it, by which a just debt, and where great indulgences have been shown the creditor in forbearance, is discharged at the rate of a shilling in the pound. Every man who is a friend to the cause is to receive the money in all payments, and to give it a circulation, as free as the air he breathes in; but it is absurd and repugnant to every principle of honor, honesty, and common sense, to say that one man shall receive a shilling in the pound of another for a just debt when that other is well able to pay twenty shillings, and the same means which enabled him to pay the one formerly will enable him, with as much ease, to pay the other now.

It is necessary for me to premise that I am totally unacquainted with your laws on this head, and the consequences of a refusal. I am only arguing, therefore in behalf of the reason and justice of my opinion, and on the presumption that all law is founded in equity. The end and design, therefore, of this (if there is such a one as compels payment under certain penalties and forfeitures) could only be to give credit and circulation to the bills in all payments, not to enrich one man at the ruin of another, which is most manifestly the case at present, and is such a glaring

abuse of common justice that I can not but wonder at the practice obtaining.

Our affairs, at present, put on a pleasing aspect, especially in Europe and the West Indies,[1] and bids us, I think, hope for the certain and final accomplishment of our independence. But as peace depends upon our allies equally with ourselves, and Great Britain has refused the mediation of Spain, it will puzzle, I conceive, the best politicians to point out with certainty the limitation of our warfare.

Experience, which is the best rule to walk by, has, I am told, clearly proved the utility of having the ditch for draining of sunken grounds on the inside, and at a considerable distance (for instance, two shovels' throw) from the bank, consequently is a better criterion to judge from than the simple opinion of your ditcher, who may govern himself by the practice of other countries that will not apply to the circumstances of this, when there may be enemies to our banks unknown, perhaps, to them. * * *

CIRCULAR TO STATES.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 26 August, 1779.

SIR,

I have the honor to enclose to your Excellency a list of sundry officers belonging to your State, who have been in captivity and are reported by the commissary of prisoners as violators of parole. A conduct of this kind, so ignominious to the individuals themselves, so dishonorable to their country and to the service in which they have been engaged, and so injurious to those gentlemen, who were associated with them in misfortune, but preserved

[1] D'Estaing had taken Grenada and St. Vincent.

their honor, demands that every measure should be taken to deprive them of the benefit of their delinquency, and to compel their return. We have pledged ourselves to the enemy to do every thing in our power for this purpose; and in consequence I directed Mr. Beatty, the commissary of prisoners, to issue the summons, which you will probably have seen in the public papers. But as it is likely to have a very partial operation, I find it necessary, in aid of it, to request the interposition of the different States to enforce a compliance. The most of these persons never having been, and none of them now being, in the Continental service, military authority will hardly be sufficient to oblige them to leave their places of residence, and return to captivity against their inclination; neither will it be difficult for them to elude a military search, and keep themselves in concealment. I must therefore entreat, that your Excellency will be pleased to take such measures, as shall appear to you proper and effectual, to produce their immediate return. This will be rendering an essential service to our officers in general in captivity, and will tend much to remove the difficulties, which now lie in the way of exchanges, and to discourage the practice of violating paroles in future. I am, &c.

TO MAJOR HENRY LEE.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 1 September, 1779.

SIR,

I have received your letter of this date, "requesting me to give you in writing the instructions, which you verbally received from me on the subject of Powles Hook, when you were last at Head-Quarters, and particularly concerning the immediate evacuation of the post after the reduction, and concerning the retreat."

When you were last at Head-Quarters, the Enterprise against Powles Hook was in contemplation, but

not finally determined, as there were some points of information still to be more fully obtained. I gave you then, in general, my ideas of the manner in which it should be conducted, whenever attempted, and desired you to use your best endeavors to procure information in such matters, as appeared not to be sufficiently well understood, and mentioned the precautions that should be taken to cover the design, and secure the party, which might be employed in the Enterprise, in its approach. But, with respect to the point to which your request more particularly extends, to wit, "the evacuation of the post, and concerning the retreat," my principal fear, from the moment I conceived a design against the post, was on account of the difficulty of the retreat, founded on the relative situation of the post to that of the Enemy on York Island. This circumstance induced me to add, that, in case the enterprise should be found eligible on farther inquiries, and determined on, no time should be lost, in case it succeeded, in attempting to bring off Cannon, stores, or any other articles, as a few minutes' delay might expose the party at least to imminent risk. I further recollect, that I likewise said, that no time should be spent, in such case, in collecting stragglers of the Garrison, who might skulk and hide themselves, lest it should prove fatal; also that, if the post could not be carried in an instant by surprise, the attempt must be relinquished. My objects were to surprise it, to bring off the garrison immediately, and to effect a secure retreat. I am, Sir, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE.[1]

WEST-POINT, 3 September, 1779.

SIR,

I have received your letter, of the 29th Ulto. accompanied by those from the General Officers, and have carefully considered their respective contents. The subject is of such a nature, that I should have thought it advisable not to have brought it to a formal investigation; but, since it has been done, I shall give you my opinion now with candor and explicitness.

When you accepted The QuarterMaster-General's department, and made a reservation of your rank, I considered it as intended to prevent the operation of a certain resolve of Congress, "declaring that no Continental officer should hold more than one com-

[1] General Greene had now served as quartermaster-general for more than a year. He had accepted the appointment reluctantly, but had executed its duties with great zeal and ability, encountering obstacles, of no ordinary kind, and rendering services of the utmost importance to the army. He had been in Philadelphia in April, endeavoring to effect some arrangements, with the concurrence of Congress, in relation to the business of his department. He found Congress so dilatory, and apparently so little inclined to second his views and his efforts, that he became weary and disgusted. "I am more and more convinced," he wrote to General Washington, "that there are measures taken to render the quartermaster's department odious in the eyes of the people; and, if I have not some satisfaction from the committee of Congress respecting the matter, I shall beg leave to quit the department. I think I shall leave it upon as good a footing as it is possible to put it, under the present difficulties. I am informed General Lincoln's leg is likely to render him incapable of holding his command at the southward. Should that be, and I leave the department I am now in, I should be happy to obtain it."—April 22d. General Lincoln had just applied to Congress for permission to retire from the southern command, on account of the unfavorable state of his wound.

Again, two days afterwards, General Greene wrote: "I have desired Congress to give me leave to resign, as I apprehended a loss of reputation if I continued in the business. They are not disposed to grant my request at all; but, unless they change the system, or publish their approbation of the present,

mission at a time," and to obviate any future doubt of your right to resume your proper station in the line, on the resignation of this office. It was not in my opinion understood, that you were to retain an actual permanent command, a proof of which is, that you immediately relinquished your division, and have continued out of command ever since, except upon two occasions of an extraordinary nature and by special appointment. My idea was, that you were to stand precisely upon the same footing, in proportion to your rank, with Quarter-Master-Generals in other services, who, from the best information I have been able to obtain, do not usually exercise a regular lineal command, but are eligible by the officer at the head of the army to occasional commands, either on de-

I shall not remain long. I will not sacrifice my reputation for any consideration whatever. I am willing to serve the public, but I think I ought to choose that way of performing the service, which will be most honorable to myself. There is a great difference between being raised to an office and descending to one, which is my case. There is also a great difference between serving where you have a fair prospect of honor and laurels, and where you have no prospect of either, let you discharge your duty ever so well. Nobody ever heard of a quartermaster in history, as such, nor in relating any brilliant action. I engaged in the business as well out of compassion to your Excellency, as from a regard to the public. I thought your task too great, to be commander-in-chief and quartermaster at the same time. Money was not my motive; for you may remember I offered to serve a year unconnected with the accounts, without any pay additional to that, which I had as a major-general."—April 24th.

"I am sorry for the difficulties you have to encounter in the department of Qrmr., especially as I was in some degree instrumental in bringing you into it. Under these circumstances I cannot undertake to give advice, or even hazard an opinion on the measures best for you to adopt. Your own judgment must direct. If it points to a resignation of your present office, & your inclination leads to the Southward, my wishes shall accompany it; and if the appointment of a successor to General Lincoln is left to me, I shall not hesitate in making choice of you for this command. But I have little expectation of being consulted on the occasion."—*Washington to Major-General Greene*, 24 April, 1779.

tachment or in the line, when, in his opinion, it is for the good of the service to employ them in this manner, and it does not interfere with the duties of the department, or with the particular and proper command of other officers. Upon this principle you were appointed to the right wing in the affair of Monmouth, and were sent to take a command under General Sullivan, and both, as far as I have ever heard, were agreeable to the general sense of the army. To attempt a more precise definition of the cases, in which you may be invested with actual command, might only lead to misapprehension, discontent on one side or another, embarrassing discussions, and perhaps confusion.

The military reason, which prevents a Quarter-Master-General from exercising command in ordinary cases, I take to be this, that, whatever may be the fact, the presumption is, that both in action and out of action he has, generally speaking, sufficient employment in the duties of his office, and circumstances alone can decide when these are compatible with actual command.

The good opinion I have of your abilities and qualifications will make me take pleasure to give you opportunities of rendering service and acquiring military honor in the field, as often as it can be done consistently with propriety, the good of the service, and the reasonable pretensions of other officers. The experience you have already had may satisfy you of my disposition. You have participated in the only two transactions of importance, which have happened

since your appointment, in which the whole or a considerable portion of the army has been concerned; but I could not undertake to draw any line, which should determine the particular instances.

You ask several questions respecting your conduct in your present department, your manner of entering it, and the services you have rendered. I remember that the proposal for your appointment originated with the Committee of arrangement, and was first suggested to me by them; that, in the conversations I had with you upon the subject, you appeared reluctantly to undertake the office, and, in one of them, offered to discharge the military duties of it without compensation for the space of a year; and I verily believe that a regard to the service, not pecuniary emolument, was the prevailing motive to your acceptance. In my opinion, you have executed the trust with ability and fidelity.

The services you have rendered the army have been important, and such as have gained my entire approbation, which I have not failed to express on more than one occasion to Congress, in strong and explicit terms. The sense of the army on this head, I believe, concurs with mine. I think it not more than justice to you to say, that I am persuaded you have uniformly exerted yourself to second my measures and our operations in general, in the most effectual manner, which the public resources and the circumstances of the times would permit.

But with the fullest allowance for your services, on the most liberal scale of compensation, I cannot but

think the construction I have given to your pretensions to command is just and ample. Your own feelings must determine whether it is satisfactory. It corresponds with my sentiments of military propriety, and is, I believe, analogous to the customary practice of armies, which is the best standard in all cases of this kind, so far as it does not contravene any positive constitution. I think, too, it is most agreeable to the sense of a majority of the general officers, whom you have consulted. If it differs from your own, I shall regret what it is not in my power to avoid. I am with great esteem and regard, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, WEST POINT,
7 September, 1779.

SIR,

The current of intelligence from New York makes the late reinforcement under Arbuthnot amount to about 3,000 troops, principally recruits, and rather in an unhealthy situation. It also speaks of preparations for an expedition, and some recent rumors point to the southern States, though the enemy have thrown out menaces against this post. If the reinforcement does not exceed this estimate, they may not think themselves able to operate effectually this way; in which case, the unpromising situation of their affairs may tempt them to make an effort to get hold of some of the southern States, to conterballance their losses in the West Indies, and favor negotiations in the Winter.

They have been for some time past fortifying across New York Island, and it is said are going to erect a strong work at Brookline on Long Island. All this may be, to have it in their power to secure their present posts with a small force, and make large detachments with the greater confidence.[1] A part may go to the West Indies, and a considerable number

[1] Sir Henry Clinton had been disappointed in not receiving reinforcements from England, and he wrote, that the operations of the Americans had rendered utterly unsuitable the plan, to which the past movements of the campaign had only been preparatory. "I now find myself obliged by many cogent reasons," he said, "to abandon every view of making an effort in this quarter. The precautions, which General Washington has had leisure to take, make me hopeless of bringing him to a general action, and the season dissuades me strongly from losing time in the attempt." His thoughts were now turned to South Carolina, where the season would permit him to act by the 1st of October, and where there was reason to hope for assistance from the inhabitants, though less than at an earlier period of the war. "In order to give the effort a fair trial," he added, "it is necessary that the corps destined for that service should get there before Washington can throw any considerable reinforcement to the southward; also before any part of the French fleet shall have come upon the coast. I am therefore employing the army to perfect the defences of New York, which at all events must be left out of reach of any insult. I shall then give the enemy every jealousy at the eastward, and, without losing a moment, the expedition will proceed to South Carolina. Having seized on the posts of Verplanck's Point and Stony Point, with a view to offensive operations in this country, their principal importance will cease when that design is discarded; and, as without great reinforcements, which we cannot expect, nothing of consequence can be carried on again in this quarter, I shall probably abandon those posts; not having troops enough without hazard and difficulty to maintain them through the winter."—*MS. Letter to Lord George Germaine*, August 21st.

In a letter dated seven days later than the above, the minister said: "Much it behoves us to profit of every means and occasion to bring the American war to an honorable conclusion; for the powers Great Britain has to contend with in Europe are so potent, as to require her utmost efforts to withstand them. The King's magnanimity is not to be shaken by the nearness of danger, nor does the spirit of the nation shrink from the increase of its difficulties. Our cause is just, our counsels firm and decided, and we trust that the zealous and able exertions of our officers will, under the Divine favor, be crowned with success."—*Lord George Germaine to Sir Henry Clinton*, August 28th.

still be spared for the purpose I am supposing; the more so, if Rhode Island, which now become to them a very inferior object, should be evacuated.

An apprehension of the Spaniards may be an objection to this plan; but they may not be deterred by this danger, from the probability that the Spaniards will rather direct their attention to Jamaica than to this continent; besides which, if they have a large force operating in the southern States, it may easily enough be turned to the defence of their own possessions that way; or, if these should be lost, they will be amply compensated by the full acquisition of Georgia and South Carolina, both of which are so weak as to be in no small danger.[1] I take the liberty

[1] The declaration of Spain against England seems to have given rise to large projects in Congress. A proposition was made to authorize an American plenipotentiary to conclude a joint treaty of alliance between France, Spain, and the United States, on condition that France and Spain should guarantee the Floridas to the United States, and also the free navigation of the Mississippi, Canada, Nova Scotia, and the fisheries. Should this be declined, the plenipotentiary should propose, on the part of the United States, to guarantee to Spain the Floridas, the Bahama Islands, in case they should be conquered, and the navigation of the Mississippi, on condition that France and Spain would guarantee Canada and Nova Scotia to the United States. These points were warmly debated.—*M. Gerard to Count Vergennes*, September 10th.

M. Gerard added, that the news of Spain having declared war against England produced great excitement and joy in America. He feared the influence would not be salutary to the common cause. It was now thought, that such strong forces were brought to bear upon England, as would compel that power to yield to moderate terms. There had always been in Congress a small party for continuing the war, and this party was now much strengthened, because the burden of the war would be chiefly borne by France and Spain. This state of things encouraged the Americans to make larger demands, suggest new conquests, and look forward to the probability of driving the English wholly from the continent. On these points there was a new organization of parties. The one opposed to the French alliance ranged itself on the side which sought a continuance of the war, and a demand for better terms in a treaty of peace;

to suggest these hints, as it seems to me to be the part of prudence to be upon our guard against a plan of this nature, and to take every precaution in our power to disappoint its success. By a letter I have received from General Lincoln, his force is insignificant, and his prospects of an addition feeble. No exertions should be omitted to make them better.

Though our force here is far from making a diminution desirable, yet, as I think we have more to apprehend to the southward than in this quarter, if Congress should be of opinion for sending the two North Carolina regiments that way, I should hope they might now be spared without material injury. The distance is a very discouraging circumstance, but the troops shall be in readiness to move the moment the pleasure of Congress is known. I have the honor to enclose the copy of a letter, which I have just received from General Sullivan, and to congratulate Congress on the agreeable and important success it announces.[1]

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO JOHN JAY.

DR. SIR, WEST POINT, Sept. the 7th, 1779.

I have received your obliging Favors of the 25th and 30th of last month and thank you for them.

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and the prospects of this triple alliance against England were too seducing not to bring over many to that side, who had before taken other grounds. Another ill effect was, that, just in proportion as accessions to the means of opposing the enemy were afforded by foreign powers, the Americans became inactive and backward in their own efforts.

[1] Giving an account of an action fought against the Indians and Tories at Newtown. See Marshall's *Life of Washington*, vol. iv., p. 106.

It really appears impossible to reconcile the conduct Britain is pursuing, to any system of prudence or policy. For the reasons you assign, appearances are against her deriving aid from other powers; and, if it is truly the case that she has rejected the mediation of Spain, without having made allies, it will exceed all past instances of her infatuation.[1] Notwithstanding appearances, I can hardly bring myself fully to believe, that it is the case; or that there is so general a combination against the interests of Britain among the European powers, as will permit them to endanger the political ballance. I think it probable enough, that the conduct of France in the affairs of the porte and Russia will make an impression on the Empress; but I doubt whether it will be sufficient to counterballance the powerful motives she has to support England; and the porte has been perhaps too

[1] Mr. Jay, President of Congress, had written as follows: "Britain refused the mediation of Spain at a time when their spirits were elated by their successes in the West Indies and the southern States, and by the accounts they received of discord in Congress, discontent among the people, and a prospect of the evils with which we were threatened by the depreciation of our currency. Deceived by these illusory gleams of hope, they permitted their counsels to be guided by their pride. What reason they may have to expect succor from other powers is as yet a secret. M. Gerard is decided in his opinion, that they will obtain none. The conduct of France in establishing peace between Russia and the Porte has won the heart of the Empress; and the influence of Versailles at Constantinople will probably give duration to her gratitude. The Emperor and Russia are under similar obligations. The latter wishes us well, and the finances of the former are too much exhausted to support the expense of a war without subsidies from Britain, who at present cannot afford them. There is no reason to suspect that the peace of Germany will soon be interrupted. Britain may hire some troops there, but it is not probable she will be able to do more. Portugal and the Dutch, while directed by their interest, will not rashly raise their hands to support a nation, which, like a tower in an earthquake, sliding from its base, will crush every slender prop that may be raised to prevent its fall."—August 25th.

much weakened in the last war with Russia to be over fond of renewing it. The Emperor is also the natural ally of England, notwithstanding the connexions of blood between his family and that of France; and he may prefer reasons of national policy to those of private attachment. 'T is true, his finances may not be in the best state, though one campaign could hardly have exhausted them; but, as Holland looks up to him for her chief protection, if he should be inclined to favor England, it may give her councils a decided byass the same way. She can easily supply what is wanting in the article of money, and by this aid give sinews to that confederacy. Denmark is also the natural ally of England; and, though there has been lately a family bickering, her political interests may outweigh private animosity. Her marine assistance would be considerable. Portugal, too, tho timid and cautious at present, if she was to see connexions formed by England able to give her countenance and security, would probably declare for her interests. Russia, Denmark, The Emperor, Holland, portugal, and England would form a respectable counterpoise to the opposite scale. Though all the maritime powers of Europe were interested in the independence of this country, as it tended to diminish the overgrown power of Britain, yet they may be unwilling to see too great a preponderancy on the side of her rivals; and when the question changes itself, from the separation of America to the ruin of England as a naval power, I should not be surprised at a proportionable change in the sentiments of some of those

states, which have been heretofore unconcerned spectators, or inclining to our side. I suggest these things rather as possible than probable. It is even to be expected, that the decisive blow will be struck before the interposition of the allies England may acquire, can have effect. But still, as possible events, they ought to have their influence, and prevent our relaxing in any measures necessary for our safety, on the supposition of a speedy peace, or removal of the war from the present theatre in America.

The account, which Mr. Wharton received, of the reinforcement that came with Adml. Arbuthnot, corresponds pretty well, with respect to numbers, with the best information I have been able to obtain upon the subject. Some recent advices make it about Three thousand, and say, that these Troops are rather in a sickly condition. It is generally said, that they are Recruits; but whether there is so great a proportion of the Scotch, as his intelligence mentions, is not ascertained by any accounts I have received.[1]

[1] Notwithstanding the reinforcements that were coming to America, and the determination of the ministry to prosecute the war with vigor, Sir Henry Clinton began to be weary of the service; and in fact he had already solicited his recall.

"I must beg leave to express," said he in writing to Lord George Germaine, "how happy I am made by the return of Lord Cornwallis to this country. His Lordship's indefatigable zeal, his knowledge of the country, his profound abilities, and the high estimation in which he is held by this army, must naturally give me the warmest confidence and efficient support from him in every undertaking, which opportunity may prompt and other circumstances allow. But his presence affords me another source of satisfaction. When there is upon the spot an officer every way qualified to have the interests of his country entrusted to him, I should hope that I might without difficulty be relieved from a station, which nobody acquainted with its conditions will suppose to have sat lightly upon me. To say truth, my Lord, my spirits are

With respect to the person you recommended last winter, he was employed in consequence, and I have not the smallest doubt of his attachment and integrity. But he has not had it in his power, and indeed it is next to impossible that any one should, circumstanced as he is, to render much essential service in the way it was intended to employ him. You will readily conceive the difficulties in such a case. The business was of too delicate a nature for him to transact it frequently himself, and the characters he has been obliged occasionally to confide it to, have not been able to gain any thing satisfactory or material. Indeed, I believe it will seldom happen, that a person acting in this way, can render any essential advantages more than once

worn out by struggling against the consequences of many adverse incidents, which, without appearing publicly to account for my situation, have effectually oppressed me. To enumerate them would be a painful and unnecessary, perhaps an improper task.

"At the same time, let me add, my Lord, that, were I conscious my particular efforts were necessary to his Majesty's service, no circumstances of private feeling would raise within me a single wish of retiring from the command. That however is not the case; for I do seriously give it as my opinion, that if the endeavours of any man are likely, under our present prospects, to be attended with success, Lord Cornwallis for many reasons stands among the first. Thus circumstanced, and convinced that the force under my command at present, or that will be during this campaign, is not equal to the services expected of me, I must earnestly request your Lordship to lay before his Majesty my humble supplication, that he will permit me to resign the command of this army to Lord Cornwallis."—*New York*, August 20th.

General Clinton considered it particularly unfortunate, that he had taken the command at a very unfavorable time, just as the war broke out with France, when it was necessary to weaken his army, and when reinforcements were withheld for other service. The Spanish war soon followed, which diminished still more the aid he had expected; yet the world was looking for successes from him, and could not judge of the disabilities under which he labored. The minister replied that the King entirely approved General Clinton's conduct in his command, and declined accepting his resignation.

or twice at any rate; and what he will be compelled to do, to preserve the pretended confidence of the other party, will generally counterballance any thing he may effect. The greatest benefits are to be derived from persons, who live with the other side; whose local circumstances, without subjecting them to suspicions, give them an opportunity of making observations, and comparing and combining things and sentiments. It is with such I have endeavored to establish a correspondence, and on whose reports I shall most rely. From these several considerations I am doubtful, whether it will be of any advantage for the person to continue longer in the way he has acted. The points, to which he must have alluded in his letter, were the movements up the North River, and against Charles-Town, and the expedition to Virginia. I believe the first certain information of the first of these events came from him. He has never received any thing from me.[1] The gentleman, who employed him first, had some money deposited with him for confidential purposes; but I cannot tell how much he may have paid him. With every sentiment of esteem, regard, and respect, I am, dear Sir, &c.

[1] The person referred to was Captain Elijah Hunter, who had been recommended to Washington by Mr. Jay and General McDougall. In June, 1783, Washington wrote to him: "you obtained such intelligence either by yourself or your correspondents, of various things which passed within the British lines, as was of considerable consequence to us. Under this recollection of circumstances, I cannot hesitate to certify that I thought at the time, and still conceive, your services were of such an interesting nature as entitled you to the good opinion and favorable notice of your countrymen." Captain Hunter may be the agent H——, mentioned in Washington's letter to Major Benjamin Tallmadge, 27 June, 1779, printed in Vol. VII., p. 475.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE, PARIS.

WEST-POINT, 12 September, 1779.

MY DEAR MARQUIS,

Often since you left this Country I have written to *you*, but have not been favored with a single line from *you* since you lay in Boston harbor. This I shall ascribe to any cause, rather than a decline of friendship. I feel my own regard for you so sensibly, that I shall never suspect a want of it in your breast. I intended to have wrote you a very long letter by Monsr. Gerard, whom I have been expecting at this place on his way to Boston for two days past; but I am this instant informed, that he either has embarked or is upon the very point of Embarking at Philadelphia. Not choosing that he should go without carrying some testimony of my constant remembrance of you, I do in much haste scribble these lines.

Most sincerely, my dear Marquis, do I congratulate you on the great and glorious exploits of Count d'Estaing in the West Indies; the bright prospect of European affairs; and our little successes in America; the last of which, though small on the great scale, will nevertheless weigh in the ballance. By our little successes I mean the storming of Stony point and the surprise of Paules hook (within cannon-shott of the City of New York), and capture of the garrisons, the first amounting to six hundred men, the other to two hundred; driving the enemy out of South Carolina; and defeat of the Indians; which last event I have within these few days received an acct. of from Gen-

eral Sullivan, who is now in the heart of their country with 4000 men, and informs me, that on the 29th ulto. he advanced to their Intrenchments, at a place called Newtown, where the warriors of seven nations, some regulars and Tories, commanded by the two Butlers,[1] Brant, and a Captn. McDonald, had been assembled eight days to oppose him. The position was well chosen and their disposition well made; but on finding themselves hard pushed in front, and their left flank in danger of being turned, they fled in great confusion and disorder and with much precipitation, leaving their packs, camp-kettles, Trinkets, and many arms on the ground, and eleven warriors which they could not get off dead. The prisoners—of which a few were taken—say, that their slain and wounded were carried off during the action on horses and in Canoes. Our loss was trifling; in the whole, to the date of this Letter, under a hundred killed and wounded, although he had advanced to and destroyed fourteen Towns, large and most flourishing Crops of Corn, pulse, &c. He was proceeding in his plan of chastisement, and will convince them, it is to be hoped, of two things; first, that their cruelties are not to pass with impunity; and, secondly, that they have been instigated to arms and acts of Barbarism by a nation, which is unable to protect them, and of consequence has left them to that correction, which is due to their villany.

The Bostonians have made an unfortunate expedition to a place called Penobscot, where a body of

[1] John Butler, and his son Walter.

about 800 men from Halifax, under the command of Brigr. Genl. McLean, had made a lodgment, as is supposed, for the purpose of getting masts and spars for their shipping. This armament from the Massachusetts Bay, (consistg. altogether of militia,) went there to dispossess them, but were so dilatory in their operations, that Sir George Collier, with a superior naval force to theirs, appearing, occasioned the destruction (by themselves) of all their shipping, and the Troops to get off as well as they could by land. This, and the conflagration of Fairfield, Norwalk, and New Haven, by the intrepid and magnanimous Tryon, who, in defiance of all the opposition that could be given by the women and Children, Inhabitants of these Towns, performed this notable exploit with 2000 brave and generous Britons, adding thereby fresh lustre to their arms and dignity to their King.

Admiral Arbuthnot, with about 3 or 4000 troops, is arrived at New York, and will, it is to be presumed, afford Sir Henry Clinton an opportunity of displaying his intentions or orders. I every moment look for the Chevalier de la Luzerne on his way from Boston to Congress. By him, I please myself with the hope of receiving a letter from you. If I am disappointed in this, I shall assuredly hear of you. I have spun my letter to a much greater length than I expected, and as Monsr. La Colombe is waiting, I will only detain him, while I can add that, with every sentiment of esteem, regard, and affection, I am, my dear Marquis, &c.

TO COUNT D'ESTAING.

SIR, HEAD QUARTERS, 13 September, 1779.

Having received intelligence which made it probable that a squadron of his most Christian Majesty was approaching our coast, I thought it my duty to meet you with the earliest advice of the situation of the enemy in this quarter. Admiral Arbuthnot arrived at New York the 25th of last month, with a reinforcement under his convoy, consisting from the best accounts I have been able to obtain of about three thousand men, mostly recruits, and in bad health. This makes the land force of the enemy at New York and its dependencies near fifteen thousand men, distributed in the following manner—on the Island of New York, about 7,000; on Long Island, about 5000; on Staten Island, about 1000; at King's ferry up the North River 45 miles from New York about 2000—and a small garrison at Powles Hook, a fortified peninsula on the Jersey shore opposite the city. This distribution is agreeable to the last advices; but the enemy's disposition undergoes very frequent changes, and may have been altered. They have been for some time past drawing a line of works across New York Island, and have lately fortified Governor's Island, near the city. They have also works on Staten Island, and are said to have begun a strong fort at Brooklyn, on Long Island.

The best information of the naval force in the harbor of New York makes it one seventy four, one sixty four, two fiftys, and two or three frigates, with a few small armed vessels.

The land force at Rhode Island is estimated between three and four thousand. There may be one or two frigates there.

Sir George Collier sailed some time since on an expedition to the eastward of Boston. The force with him was composed of one vessel of the line, one forty four gun ship, and several smaller frigates and armed vessels. He has completed his object, but I have not heard of his return.

If it is your Excellency's intentions to operate against the enemy at New York, it will be infinitely interesting that you should immediately enter the harbor, and make such dispositions as will be best calculated to prevent a reunion of their force at a single point which would make their reduction a matter of no small difficulty. If your Excellency has a land force you will be able to judge in what manner it may be most usefully employed to intercept the detachments on Long and Staten Islands. From the situation of the former relatively to New York, it will not be easy to intercept the troops there, because the enemy can throw their troops from one to the other at pleasure; and your ships could not conveniently lie in the East River to cut off the communication. It is not improbable the enemy's fleet will endeavor to take shelter in this river.

It will also be of importance to run two or three frigates up the North River, into Haverstraw bay, to obstruct the retreat of the garrisons at King's ferry by water; and I should be happy these frigates may announce themselves by firing a number of guns in quick

succession, which will put it in my power to push down a body of troops below the garrisons on the East side to intercept a retreat by land to King's ferry bridge. This will also answer the purpose of giving me earlier advice of your arrival than I would obtain in any other way. But some caution will be necessary for the passage of these frigates up the river, as there have been some chevaux de frise sunk opposite fort Washington, which has given a partial obstruction to the channel. Your Excellency will probably be able to capture some seamen who will be acquainted with the navigation of the River in its present state.

To prevent the retreat of any part of the enemy through the sound, it would be useful to detach a few ships round to take a convenient station there. These may answer another object, to hinder the evacuation of Rhode Island, either to form a junction with the main body, or withdraw to a place of security and avoid falling into your hands. The detachment for this purpose need not be greater than to be a full match for Sir George Collier.

I have taken the liberty to throw out these hints for your Excellency's information, and permit me to entreat that you will favor me as soon as possible with an account of your Excellency's and the land force under your command, which will help me to judge what additional succor it may be expedient to draw from the country, and what other measures ought to be taken for a perfect co-operation. I also entreat your Excellency's sentiments on the manner of this co-operation, and you may depend upon every exer-

tion [ ] in my power to promote the success of an enterprise, from which such decisive advantages may be expected to the common cause.

I sincerely congratulate you on your glorious victories in the West Indies, in which no one takes greater interest than myself as well from motives of personal attachment as a concern for the common cause. I have the honor &c.

P. S. Major Lee who will have the honor of delivering these despatches is an officer of intelligence and judgment, in whose information your Excellency may place great confidence. He will be happy to execute any orders with which you may be pleased to honor him.

TO JOHN BEATTY, COMMISSARY-GENERAL OF PRISONERS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, WEST POINT,
23 September, 1779.

SIR,

I have received your report dated the 22d of your transactions with Mr. Loring, on the subject of exchanges. Mr. Loring's answer to your first proposition revives the old question of a composition of privates for officers, which has been so repeatedly and so fruitlessly agitated, and which can now only tend to embarrass the relief of the prisoners on both sides. It seems, that the more we do to remove the obstacles in the way of exchanges, the more solicitous the enemy are to contrive new ones, and revile the old; as if they expected at length to fatigue us into compliance with their unreasonable demands. I know

not with what face of justice or decency they can depart, whenever it suits a particular interest, from all those principles, which have been agreed upon between us, and have uniformly governed our exchanges. The only established rule of exchange hitherto has been, "officer for officer of equal rank, and soldier for soldier." The settled disinclination of the enemy to fixing general and permanent rules, adequate to all the cases of captivity, have obliged us to content ourselves with partial and particular exchanges; and, from every thing that has happened, their ideas are so remote from ours, that there is little reason to expect any future negotiation would be attended with more success than the past, or that we should ever be able to unite in a Tariff, which would have no other object than the relief of prisoners on terms of equal advantage. While this continues a secondary motive with the enemy, & the augmentation of their force by a large accession of privates the ruling one, nothing of that kind can be expected. If we, therefore, renounce particular exchanges on the former plan, the prisoners will have no other prospect before them, than that of hopeless captivity.

I would wish you, in your answer to Mr. Loring, to represent these things to him in a decent but pointed manner, to make him sensible of the inconsistency of his conduct, and the ill-consequences it must produce; informing him at the same time, that we will not hereafter make any exchanges whatsoever, unless they extend to officers & privates indiscriminately, on the footing which has heretofore obtained. The instruc-

tions I have already given you, on the subject of composition, are not to be exceeded; and I would wish the question of privates for officers to be avoided, as I am certain, from the unreasonableness of the enemy on this head, that it can answer no other purpose, than to perplex and impede the business. If in treating of a Tariff, Mr. Loring persists in pressing Conway's cartel as a model, he can be very justly told, that the circumstances of the parties in the present war differ much from those of France and England, at the time of that treaty, and that these are the only proper standard by which to regulate our agreements.

You will insist on your second proposition, informing the enemy, that this mode is not without reference to their wishes, but to discourage the practice of breaking paroles, and establish a distinction between the violators and the scrupulous observers; that their interest can be no way affected by it, and consequently they can have no reasonable objection. As to the third answer, you will explicitly inform them, that I have nothing to do with those persons, not military prisoners, who have broken their paroles, either to exchange or return them; that I do not consider them as proper subjects of military capture, in the first instance, nor hold myself bound to restore them to a state of captivity, in which they were first placed, contrary to the usages of nations.

Col. Webb's exchange by composition we cannot claim as a matter of right, but I wish every method in our power to be taken to induce the enemy to consent to it. The pretext of not being willing to continue partial exchanges is forced and ridiculous; the

more, as there are such recent instances in the cases of Edmondston & Featherstone. You must plead the constant practice heretofore; the generous treatment shown to the prisoners taken in the Eagle; the obligation in point of honor and justice, upon the enemy to return an equivalent; and the proposals, they themselves have made at different times for particular exchanges by composition. You will observe to them, that the gentlemen taken in the Eagle are not under a parole, but absolutely released and at liberty to act; that by an authentic act of their consul at Corunna they have incurred a debt, which they cannot without a flagrant breach of faith refuse to pay; that the exchange, so far as it depends on us, is already made, and that they have no choice but to make a return. You will demand an explanation of what they mean by "the former principles"; whether it is, that they are ready to return an equal number, of equal ranks, on the *former principle of equality of rank*, or whether they refuse to make a return for these, unless the terms of their first proposition are complied with. After you have prepared your answer in the spirit of these instructions, you will let me have a view of it. I am, &c.

TO MAJOR BENJAMIN TALLMADGE.

HEAD-QUARTERS, WEST POINT,
24 September, 1779.

SIR,

I this morning recd. your letter of the 22d with its several enclosures.

It is not my opinion, that Culper Junr.[1] should be

[1] The fictitious name of a spy in New York.

advised to give up his present employment. I would imagine, that with a little industry he will be able to carry on his intelligence with greater security to himself, and greater advantages to us, under cover of his usual business, than if he were to dedicate himself wholly to the giving of information. It may afford him opportunities of collecting intelligence, that he could not derive so well in any other manner. It prevents also those suspicions, which would become natural, should he throw himself out of the line of his present employment. He may rest assured of every proper attention being paid to his services. One thing appears to me deserving of his particular consideration, as it will not only render his communication less exposed to detection, but relieve the fears of such persons as may be entrusted with its conveyance to the second link in the chain, and of course very much facilitate the object we have in view; I mean, that he should occasionally write his information on the blank leaves of a pamphlet, on the first, second, &c. pages of a common pocket-book, or on the blank leaves at each end of registers, almanacs, or any new publication or book of small value. He should be determined in the choice of these books principally by the goodness of the blank paper, as the ink is not easily legible unless it is on paper of good quality. Having settled a plan of this kind with his friend, he may forward them without risque of search, or the scrutiny of the enemy, as this is chiefly directed against paper made up in the form of letters.

I would add a further hint on this subject. Even

letters may be made more subservient to this communication, than they have yet been. He may write a familiar letter on domestic affairs, or on some little matters of business, to his friend at Satauket or elsewhere, interlining with the stain his secret intelligence, or writing it on the opposite blank side of the letter. But that his friend may know how to distinguish these from letters addressed solely to himself, he may always leave such as contain secret information without date or place (dating it with the stain), or fold them up in a particular manner, which may be concerted between the parties. This last appears to be the best mark of the two, and may be the signal of their being designed for me. The first mentioned mode, however, or that of the books, appears to me the one least liable to detection.[1] I am, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL LINCOLN.

WEST-POINT 28th, September, 1779.

My DEAR SIR,

I received your letter of the 8th of July, with that pleasure which we always experience in hearg. from those for whom we have a real esteem. The details you gave me of your attack upon Stono Ferry are

[1] The identity of Culper and Culper, Jr. has been undiscovered. In Sir Henry Clinton's Intelligence Book for June, 1781, is a record of "one Nathaniel Ruggles, who lives at Setalket," and who sent over intelligence from Long Island every fortnight by "Brewster, who comes from Connecticut and lands at the Old Man's. Ruggles comes to New York frequently." Most of Culper's letters are dated from Setauket, were written at times as frequently as once a week, and were sent to John Bolton (a name assumed by Major Tallmadge in this business) by Lieutenant or Capt. Caleb Brewster, who came over for them at such times as Culper should appoint. I have little doubt that Ruggles was Culper, but I have not been able to identify Culper, Jr.

obliging and satisfactory; and "though all was not done which you wished," I have no doubt that the attempt had a good effect, and at least accelerated the retreat of the enemy. It did no discredit to our arms, even by *their* accounts.

I am chagrined at the delays, which the intended succors from Virginia have met with, the more as by my last accounts they continue. I hope, however, they may still arrive in time to be useful, and that you may not be disappointed in your other operations. Notwithstanding the embarrassed situation of the enemy, I am far from being satisfied they will not make another and more vigorous effort to the southward this campaign. They have very powerful motives to it. The *full* possession of Georgia and the acquisition of South Carolina would be a good counterpoise to their losses in the Islands. It would give credit to their cause in Europe, favor negotiations in the winter, or help to gain friends for a further prosecution of the war. It would also open new sources of supplies, of which they now stand in need, both on the continent and in the West Indies, from the superiority in the English channel, which the junction of Spain must have produced, and the restraint it will impose upon exportations from England and Ireland. I see no better purpose to which they can apply their army in America. Inferior in naval force in the Islands, they cannot think of recovering those they have lost, or of acquiring others. To garrison and preserve the remainder seems to be all they can reasonably have in view. If

they make a detachment of four or five thousand men, in addition to the troops already there, it will in my opinion be sufficient for this purpose. Then, by evacuating Rhode Island, they may spare three or four thousand more for operations in your quarter, and keep a garrison of nine or ten thousand men for the defence of New York and its dependencies, which, from its particular shape and insular situation, and the works they have raised and are raising, would be pretty well out of the reach of any enterprise on our part, without the coöperation of a fleet.[1]

The possibility of an aid of this kind will indeed be an objection to the measure I am supposing; and the ideas of the enemy under their present discouragements may perhaps more naturally embrace plans of more security than conquest. But upon the whole, the probability of the latter is sufficiently great to re-

[1] The British General had determined on an expedition to Carolina, and was making preparations for it, when intelligence arrived from Governor Dalling at Jamaica, that he was in great apprehension for that Island, and requested immediate succor. Sir Henry Clinton did not hesitate a moment in determining to send every possible assistance. Lord Cornwallis offered himself to take command of the land forces, and sailed in consequence on the 24th of September, with four thousand men, and all the line-of-battle ships. It was not possible to give instructions for such an enterprise. The safety of Jamaica was the first object; the protection of Pensacola the next; and the reduction of New Orleans the third, should events render it advisable. The detachment was then to join the army at Savannah. In this state of things it was impracticable to send any forces to South Carolina. This latter expedition could only be effected by withdrawing the troops from Rhode Island. Admiral Arbuthnot proposed to visit that post, and consider the expediency of an evacuation. Should that be deemed advisable, then four thousand men might be sent to the south, and although they would not reach their destination so soon by six weeks as was proposed, yet there was reason to believe they would arrive in time to be advantageously employed; but, should the French or Spaniards throw in forces, nothing more than the defence of Georgia could be expected.—*Sir Henry Clinton to Lord George Germaine*, September 26th.

quire every precaution on our side. Southern operations appear to have been for some time past a favorite object in the British cabinet. The weakness of the southern States affords a strong temptation; the advantages are important and inviting; and even the desperate aspect of their affairs itself may inspire a spirit of enterprise and teach the necessity of some bold stroke to counterbalance their misfortunes and disgraces, and to restore their reputation and influence.

The enclosed extracts contain, substantially, the most authentic intelligence I have received of the enemy's motions and designs. You will perceive they are making large detachments, and that the southern States are spoken of as a principal object. The particular corps, too, which are mentioned, point that way. They would not separate their grenadiers and light infantry, but for some important *coup de main;* and this I imagine is the manner in which they would proceed against Charlestown. Nor do I see where, except with you, they can intend to employ their cavalry. But there may be a mistake in this part of the intelligence, from the difficulty of ascertaing. corps with precision; and some movements among those, which are specified, may have occasioned a deception. A variety of correspondent accounts of late has led us to a belief, that Count d'Estaing sailed from the Cape early in August, bound to some part of this continent. From the direction he took when an American vessel parted with him, on the 23d Augt., Georgia, or St. Augustine, or both, were supposed to be his destination. If this were the case, you must

have had knowledge of his operations long since; but a vessel just arrived at the Eastward, amuses us with a story of her having seen him in the latitude of Bermudas, where it is said he took the captain of this vessel on board as a pilot. The period of time, to which this event is referred, is the 10th inst.; but the Count has not yet made his appearance on this coast. Perhaps the winds, which have been contrary, have retarded him. Perhaps Halifax is the point to which his attention is directed; or perhaps the whole tale is a contrivance; though it comes to me with strong circumstances of probability. I have no doubt that you will make every exertion in your power to be prepared for the worst; and I hope you will be effectually seconded by the States immediately interested, and who also are near enough to give you the necessary succor. It is to be lamented, that the distance and other circumstances are insurmountable barriers to the support of any part of the troops here. With the truest esteem and regard, &c.

TO GOVERNOR TRUMBULL.

HEAD-QUARTERS, WEST POINT,
30 September, 1779.

SIR,

The irregularities and injuries, which have been committed against the Inhabitants of Long Island, and of other places in the possession of the Enemy, by persons who professed to have no other views than these men profess, as Your Excellency observes, have been exceedingly great; and I do not believe it

will be possible to prevent a repetition of them, but by wholly discountenancing and prohibiting the business in the manner Your Excellency has already done, or that any line of discrimination can be established. But however this might be, I have no alternative in the case, Congress having, by their Act of the 22d of June, enjoined it in a particular manner on all the officers of the army to use their exertions to prevent the parties from going to Long Island, or other places in the possession of the Enemy, under the idea of seizing or destroying Tory property. The distinction between Whig and Tory, Friend and Foe, is so easy to set up, especially where it is the interest of such parties to do it, that even many of our best and fast friends, under the pretext of their being of the latter sort, have had their property wrested from them in the most unjustifiable, cruel, and impolitic manner.

I received last night a South Carolina paper, of the 8th Inst., by which it appears, that an officer of Count d'Estaing's had arrived at Charleston with despatches, announcing that the Count and his fleet were near that Coast.[1] I flatter myself our next

[1] The same intelligence reached the British Admiral at New York two or three days earlier. It was inferred by him and Sir Henry Clinton that an attack upon New York was the object in contemplation, and the armament under Cornwallis, which had already sailed for Jamaica, was ordered back. The fleet assembled again in the harbor, and the troops were disembarked.

The Admiral's suggestion to abandon Rhode Island had been considered. Besides the expedition to Carolina, a descent in the Chesapeake was meditated, which would require two thousand men. These could hardly be spared, after having sent two thousand to Canada, without drawing off the forces from Rhode Island. The Admiral was about to sail for that place, and examine into the matter, when the news of Count d'Estaing's movements at the South reached

advices from thence will inform us, that his Excellency has struck some important and interesting stroke against the enemy in the Southern Quarter. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE, PARIS.

WEST-POINT, 30 September, 1779.

MY DEAR MARQUIS,

A few days ago I wrote you a letter in much haste. The cause, a sudden notification of Monsr. Gerard's having changed the place of his embarkation from Boston (as was expected) to Philadelphia, and the hurry Monsr. de la Columbe was in to reach the latter before the minister should have left it. Since that, I have been honor'd with the company of the Chevalier de la Luzerne, and by him was favord with your obliging letter of the 12th of June, which filled me with equal pleasure and surprise; the latter at hearing that you had not received one of the many letters I had written to you since you left the American shore. I cannot at this time charge my memory with the precise dates of these letters. But the first,

New York. There were additional motives for the evacuation of Rhode Island. Sir Henry Clinton looked upon that post to be quite unessential in the land operations of the war, and the Admiral deemed it equally unimportant in respect to the navy, and considered its fate involved in that of New York. Threatened as the latter place was at present, not a ship could be spared for the defence of the former. Such were the forcible reasons for rescuing the garrison and stores at Rhode Island from an unprotected state, and giving security to the harbor of New York. Orders were sent to General Prescott to evacuate the post without delay, and transports and other vessels were despatched for the purpose.—*MS. Letter from Sir Henry Clinton*, September 30th.

which ought and I expected would have reached you at Boston, and I much wished it to do so, (because it contained a Letter from me to Doctr. Franklin expressive of the Sentiments I entertained of your Services and Merit) was put into the hands of a Capt. McQueen, of Charles Town, who was to sail from Phila. soon after. In March again I wrote you once or twice, and in June, or the first of July, following, (when it was reported that Monsr. Gerard was about to leave us I took the liberty of committing to his care another of my letters to you), which several efforts, though they may have been unsuccessful, will exhibit no bad specimen of my having kept you constantly in remembrance, and a desire of giving you proofs of it.

It gave me infinite pleasure to hear, from yourself, of the favorable reception you met with from your sovereign, and of the joy, which your safe arrival in France had diffused among your friends. I had no doubt, but that this wou'd be the case. To hear it from yourself adds pleasure to the acct.; and here, my dear friend, let me congratulate you on your new, honorable, and pleasing appointment in the army commanded by the Count de Vaux, which I shall accom'y with an assurance, that none can do it with more warmth of affection, or sincere joy, than myself.[1] Your forward zeal in the cause of liberty; Your singular attachment to this infant world; your ardent and persevering efforts, not only in America,

[1] Lafayette described himself as the aide-maréchale-général des logis, "a very important and agreeable place" in the French service.

but since your return to France, to serve the United States; your polite attention to Americans, and your strict and uniform friendship for *me*, has ripened the first impressions of esteem and attachment, which I imbibed for you, into such perfect love and gratitude, that neither time nor absence can impair. Which will warrant my assuring you, that, whether in the character of an officer at the head of a corps of gallant French, (if circumstances should require this,) whether as a major-genl. commanding a division of the American army, or whether, after our Swords and spears have given place to the ploughshare and pruning-Hook, I see you as a private gentleman, a friend and companion, I shall welcome you in all the warmth of friendship to Columbia's shores; and, in the latter case, to my rural cottage, where homely fare and a cordial reception shall be substituted for delicacies and costly living. This, from past experience, I know *you* can submit to; and if the lovely partner of your happiness will consent to participate with *us* in such rural entertainment and amusem'ts, I can undertake, in behalf of Mrs. Washington, that she will do every thing in her power to make Virginia agreeable to the Marchioness. My inclination and endeavors to do this cannot be doubted, when I assure you, that I love every body that is dear to you, consequently participate in the pleasure you feel in ye prospt. of again becoming a parent, and do most sincerely congratulate you and your Lady on this fresh pledge she is about to give you of her love.

I thank you for the trouble you have taken and your polite attention, in favoring me with a copy of your letter to Congress; and feel, as I am persuaded they must do, the force of such ardent zeal as you there express for the interests of this Country. The propriety of the hint you have given them must carry conviction, and I trust will have a salutary effect[1]; tho there is not, I believe, the same occasion for the admonition now, there was several months ago. Many late changes have taken place in that honorable body, which have removed in a very great degree, if not wholly, the discordant spirit which, it is said, prevailed in the winter; and I hope measures will also be taken to remove those unhappy and improper differences, which have extended themselves elsewhere, to the prejudice of our affairs in Europe. * * *

I have had great pleasure in the visit, which the Chevalier de la Luzerne and Monsieur Marbois did me the honor to make at this camp; for both of whom I have imbibed the most favorable impressions, and I thank you for the honorable mention you made of me to them. The Chevr., till he had an-

[1] "I will frankly tell you, sir, that nothing can more effectually hurt our interests, consequence and reputation, in Europe, than to hear of disputes or divisions between the Whigs. Nothing could urge my touching upon this delicate matter but the unhappy experience of every day on this head, since I can hear myself what is said on this side of the Atlantic, and the arguments I have to combat with."—*Lafayette to the President of Congress*, 12 June, 1779. "There is another point for which you should employ all your influence and popularity. For God's sake prevent their loudly disputing together. Nothing hurts so much the interest and reputation of America, as to hear of their intestine quarrels."—*Lafayette to Washington*, 12 June, 1779.

nounced himself to Congress, did not choose to be received in his public character. If he had, except paying him military honors, it was not my intention to depart from that plain and simple manner of living, which accords with the real Interest and policy of men struggling under every difficulty for the attainment of the most inestimable blessing of life, *Liberty*. The Chevalier was polite enough to approve my principle, and condescended to appear pleased with our Spartan living. In a word, he made us all exceedingly happy by his affability and good humor, while he remained in camp.

You are pleased, my dear Marquis, to express an earnest desire of seeing me in France, (after the establishment of our independency), and do me the honor to add, that you are not singular in your request. Let me entreat you to be persuaded, that to meet you any where, after the final accomplishment of so glorious an event, would contribute to my happiness; and that to visit a county, to whose generous aid we stand so much indebted, would be an additional pleasure; but remember, my good friend, that I am unacquainted with your language, that I am too far advanced in years to acquire a knowledge of it, and that, to converse through the medium of an interpreter upon common occasions, especially with the Ladies, must appear so extremely awkward, insipid, and uncouth, that I can scarce bear it in idea. I will, therefore, hold myself disengaged for the present; but when I see you in Virginia, we will talk of this matter and fix our plans.

The declaration of Spain, in favor of France has given universal joy to every Whig; while the poor Tory droops, like a withering flower under a declining Sun. We are anxiously expecting to hear of great and important events on your side the Atlantic. At present, the imagination is left in the wide field of conjecture. Our eyes one moment are turned to an Invasion of England, then of Ireland, Minorca, Gibraltar, &c. In a word, we hope every thing, but know not what to expect, or where to fix. The glorious successes of Count d'Estaing in the West Indies, at the same time that it adds dominion to France, and fresh lustre to her arms, is a source of *new* and unexpected misfortune to our *tender and generous parent*, and must serve to convince her of the folly of quitting the substance in pursuit of the shadow; and, as there is no experience equal to that which is bought, I trust she will have a superabundance of this kind of knowledge, and be convinced, as I hope all the world and every tyrant in it will, that the best and only safe road to honor, glory, and true dignity, is *justice*.

We have such repeated advices of Count d'Estaing's being in these seas, that, (though I have no official information of the event,) I cannot help giving entire credit to the report, and looking for his arrival every moment, and am preparing accordingly. The enemy at New York also expect it; and, to guard against the consequences, as much as it is in their power to do, are repairing and strengthening all the old fortifications, and adding new ones in the vicinity of the

City. Their fears, however, does not retard an embarcation, which was making, (and generally believed) to be for the West Indies or Charles Town. It still goes forward; and, by my intelligence, will consist of a pretty large detachment. About 14 days ago, one British Regiment (44th compleated) and 3 Hessian regiments embarked, and are gone, as is supposed to Halifax,[1] under convoy of Admiral Arbuthnot about the 20th of last month. The Enemy recd. a reinforcemt. consisting of 2 new raised Scotch Regts. some drafts and a few recruits amounting altogether to about 3,000 men; and a few days ago Sir Andw. Hammond arriv'd with (as it is said) abt. 2,000 more. Many of these new Troops died on their passage and since landing ye rest are very sickly—as indeed their whole army is, while ours keeps remarkably healthy. The operations of the enemy this campaign have been confined to the establishment of works of defence, taking a post at King's Ferry, and burning the defenceless towns of New Haven, Fairfield, and Norwalk, &c. on the Sound within reach of their shipping, where little else was or could be opposed to them, than the cries of distressed women and helpless children; but these were offered in vain. Since these notable exploits, they have never stepped out of their works or beyond their lines. How a conduct of this kind is to effect the conquest of America, the wisdom of a North, a Germaine, or Sandwich best can tell. It is too deep

[1] These troops were actually designed for Canada, being the reinforcement requested by General Haldimand. They sailed on the 10th of September.

and refined for the comprehension of common understandings and general run of politicians. * * *

But to conclude you requested from me a long letter —I have given you one—but methinks my dear Marquis I hear you say there is reason in all things—that this is too long—I am clearly in sentiment with you and will have mercy on you in my next—But at present must pray your patience a while longer, till I can make a tender of my most respectful compliments to the Marchioness.—Tell her, (if you have not made a mistake and offered your own love instead of *hers*, to me) that I have a heart susceptable of the tenderest passion, and that it is already so strongly impressed with the most favorable ideas of her, that she must be cautious of putting loves torch to it, as you must be in fanning the flame.—But here again methinks I hear you say, I am not apprehensive of danger—My wife is young—you are growing old and the Atlantic is between you—All this is true, but know my good friend that no distance can keep *anxious* lovers long asunder, and that the wonders of former ages may be revived in this—But alas! will you not remark that amidst all the wonders recorded in holy writ no instance can be produced where a young Woman from *real inclination* has prefered an old man—This is so much against me that I shall not be able *I fear* to contest the prize with you—yet, under the encouragement you have given me I shall enter the list for so inestimable a jewell.

I will now reverse the scene and inform you that Mrs. Washington, (who set out for Virginia when we

took the field in June,) often has in her letters to me inquired if I had heard from you, and will be much pleased at hearing that you are well and happy. In her name, (as she is not here,) I thank you for your polite attention to her, and shall speak her sense of the honor conferred on her by the Marchioness. When I look back to the length of this letter, I am so much astonished and frightened at it myself that, I have not the courage to give it a careful reading for the purpose of correction. You must, therefore, receive it with all its imperfections, accompanied with this assurance, that, though there may be inaccuracies in the letter, there is not a single defect in the friendship of, my dear Marquis, yours, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, WEST POINT,
4 October, 1779.

SIR,

I had the honor of receiving your Excellency's letter of the 26th and 27th ultimo, at half after twelve o'clock yesterday.

Immediately upon the Receipt of it, I set about concerting the measures necessary for a coöperation with His Excellency the Count d'Estaing, agreeably to the powers vested in me by the Resolve of Congress[1] of the 26th Ulto. I have called upon the State

[1] The French minister received letters from Charleston, South Carolina, dated September 5th and 8th, conveying intelligence of the arrival of the Count d'Estaing in Georgia. These letters were immediately laid before Congress, who resolved that a copy of them should be sent to General Washington, and

of Massachusetts for 2000 militia, Connecticut for 4000, New York for 2500, New Jersey for 2000, and Pennsylvania for 1500. The last is below the quota, that she ought to furnish, in proportion to her strength; but I was induced to make a requisition of that number only, upon a consideration that we shall be obliged to call largely upon that State for the means of transportation of provisions and supplies of all kinds. I have also taken the liberty to press the States above mentioned to use the most vigorous exertions in procuring supplies of provision, especially of flour, for the want of which I fear we shall be much embarrassed, should we draw such a head of men together, as will be necessary to give our operations a tolerable prospect of success. I have not heard from General Sullivan but by report, since the 30th August. I have however despatched an Express to him, (upon a supposition that he has compleated the object of his expedition and is upon his return,) desiring him to hasten his march, and directing him to leave as few men as he possibly can in the frontier garrisons. I have also written to General Gates, desiring him to hold all the Continental troops under his command ready to march this way, should the Count d'Estaing, upon settling a plan of operations,

" that the General should also be informed of the intention of our ally, that the armament under Count d'Estaing shall operate against the enemy in these United States; and that General Washington be authorized and directed to concert and execute such plans of coöperation with the minister of France, as he may think proper."—*Secret Journals*, September 26th. It was at the same time recommended to the several States, that they should furnish General Washington with such succors as he might require, both by detachments of militia, and by providing for the allied armaments ample supplies of provisions.

determine upon an attempt against New York. But as there is a possibility that he may, upon being made acquainted with the numbers and situation of the enemy, prefer an attack upon Rhode Island, I have desired General Gates to be looking towards and preparing for such an event. I had, upon the first report of the Count's standing towards this Coast, stationed Major Lee in Monmouth, with a letter for him, to be carried on board upon his first appearance, in which I informed him of the enemy's force by Sea and land, and their position at that time, and pointed out to him the measures, which I thought it would be most advantageous for him to pursue upon his arrival.

I am preparing fresh letters for him, in which I shall inform him fully of all posterior Events, and the measures I am taking for a coöperation. I am also engaging and sending down proper pilots to him. I have taken the liberty to countermand the march of Colo. Clarke with the two Regiments of North Carolina, upon a presumption, that, from the favorable aspect of affairs to the southward, I shall stand justifiable for such a measure. I observe by a Resolve of Congress lately transmitted to me, that three of the Continental Frigates were ordered to South Carolina. I do not know the views of Congress in making this disposition; but, should they have no particular object in contemplation, I would venture to recommend their being ordered to join the Count's Fleet, which in my opinion would be much benefited by an additional number of Frigates, especially for

the navigation of the North River and the Sound. I think it would be also well should the Marine Committee be directed to turn their attention to the transportation of Flour from the Delaware and Chesapeake by Water. Should we obtain the command of the Sea, Vessels might, without the least danger, be introduced within the Hook, thence to Amboy, from whence their Cargoes might easily be conveyed in Boats up Newark Bay. Or should some of them run round into the Sound, it would be equally, nay, more convenient. Should we operate to the eastward, measures of this kind will be indispensably necessary, as the length and difficulty of land Carriage will render the support of any considerable Body of men almost impossible. The Wheat of Maryland being in more forwardness for grinding, than any other, I could wish that Governor Johnson may be requested to push the purchases within that State. The Commissary-General gives the fullest encouragement on the score of Beef, but of Flour he continues to express his fears. I am, &c.[1]

TO COUNT D'ESTAING.

WEST POINT, 4 October, 1779.

SIR,

* * * * * *

I beg leave to enclose a copy of the abovementioned letter,[2] and the substance of the intelligence

[1] Read in Congress, October 8th. Referred to delegates of Delaware, Maryland, South Carolina, to take order thereon.

[2] Of September 13th.

since received. Your Excellency will observe, that only two detachments of troops have sailed from New York; one consisting of three German and one British regiment for Halifax or Quebec, and the other composed of the grenadiers, light infantry, and one British regiment, supposed to be destined to the southern States. I have not received any account of the debarkation of the Halifax detachment, and I believe it has prosecuted its voyage. One of the transports has been taken and carried into Philadelphia, with one hundred and sixty men on board. She reports Halifax to have been her destination. I have reason to believe, from some information recently obtained, that the latter detachment has returned.[1] These, however, are not altogether authentic; but I am the more inclined to give them credit, as I think it probable they were bound to South Carolina, and in their way may have heard of your Excellency's arrival in that quarter, which would naturally occasion their return to New York.

The enemy's force in New York and its dependencies, supposing the return of the above detachment, I now estimate at fourteen thousand. Their fleet

[1] "Since my last intelligence which I communicated to Congress, I have been advised from New York of the sudden return of the division of troops under Lord Cornwallis. A number of transports, on his Lordship's return to the Hook, were immediately ordered for Rhode Island; part of which sailed on the 27th, and the rest on the 29th ulto.; as my correspondent supposes, to withdraw the garrison. The advice says further, that the troops under Lord Cornwallis were still on shipboard; and that the reinforcement in the fleet under the convoy of Sir Andrew Hammond, which arrived the 22d of last month, does not exceed six hundred men, and these chiefly Hessian recruits; other accounts speak of the number as much higher."—*Washington to the President of Congress*, 9 October, 1779.

consists of the Russell of seventy-four, the Europa of sixty-four, the Renown of fifty, the Roebuck of forty-four, and a few smaller frigates. Your Excellency will perceive, that their affairs are in a fluctuating state; and therefore many changes may have taken place since my last advices.

From the advanced season of the year, every instant of time is infinitely precious, and must be even more so to your Excellency than to us. This makes it to be lamented, that it had not been possible to preconcert a plan before your arrival. The force under your command, and the time you can devote to this business, are essential points in determining what can with propriety be undertaken; and the first steps will be of great consequence to all the succeeding ones. To enable you the better to regulate your own movements, I shall expose to you our prospects, and the different plans which present themselves to me, with the obstacles attending each.

New York is the first and capital object, upon which every other is dependent. The loss of the army and fleet there would be one of the severest blows the English nation could experience. Rhode Island would fall of course; but your Excellency will be sensible, that the reduction of fourteen thousand men, concentred upon a small Island with the assistance of fortifications, is an enterprise of no inconsiderable difficulty; and requires a vigorous exertion of our resources, in conjunction with your force, to give it a sufficient probability of success. Not less than thirty thousand men will in my opinion be ade-

quate to the operation, and we cannot collect the numbers necessary on our part, in addition to what we already have in the field, in less than three weeks from this time. The interval between your arrival and that period must for the most part be spent in a state of inactivity on your side, unless you judge it proper to direct your attention to an attempt upon Rhode Island.

The knowledge you have of this place will enable you, better than me, to decide on the eligibility of this project. The garrison there is respectable, and, as I am informed, secured by a chain of redoubts and retrenchments from one flank of the Island to the other, which would be exceedingly formidable to an assault. The town however may be burnt, and with it the enemy's magazines, which it is probable would speedily reduce them to a surrender. Your Excellency is a better judge than I am of the time, which would be exhausted in this enterprise; but I should imagine it might require at least four weeks for its accomplishment. If you should think proper to pursue this plan, we have a body of two thousand troops now ready at Rhode Island, and can march thither any additional number you may deem necessary for a coöperation. But in order to this, I must request you will give me previous notice of your intention.

Success in this attempt would be favorable to our ulterior operations against New York, but a failure would be attended with the reverse, as it would damp the spirits of the country and diminish its exertions.

Another inconvenience would attend it, which is, that, without a division of your force to continue the blockade of New York, the fleet now there would make its escape. Indeed, in any plan, a division of your force will be indispensable. Rhode Island and the Sound must be blockaded, otherwise the garrison there will form a junction with the main body at New York, which would be so great an accession of force, as would render the success of our operations improbable; and the frigates and smaller vessels may find a passage through the Sound, and elude your Excellency in that way. But the difference is this. In the latter case, two or three fifty-gun ships, and as many frigates, will answer the purpose. In the former, some of your ships of the line must be left at New York, to have a superiority to the two that are there, aided by the frigates. In case of the attempt upon Rhode Island, the only expedient, to avoid a division of your ships of the line, will be, to remain with the whole at New York, and send your troops round under the protection of your frigates. Your Excellency is the best judge with what propriety a movement of this kind can be hazarded.

In either event, it appears to me advisable, that you should first enter the bay of New York, with a part at least, of your fleet, and, as suddenly as possible, intercept the troops on Staten Island, and the garrisons up the river, as the capture of these will materially facilitate the reduction of the remaining force; and I take the liberty strongly to recommend, that a proper detachment may without loss of time

block up the Sound and the port of Rhode Island. I have taken measures for furnishing you with pilots; one of them acccompanies this letter; but I have directed three or four to be stationed with Major Lee at Monmouth, to put off to your Excellency on your first appearance. Among these is one, who is acquainted with the navigation of the North River, in its present state, and will be able to take up the frigates, which I had the honor to request might proceed into Haverstraw Bay.

I have written to Congress, to recommend the assembling all our frigates and armed vessels, to act in conjunction with the fleet under your command.

With candor and freedom have I exposed to your Excellency my sentiments and expectations; and I entreat that you will honor me with a similar communication of your views and intentions. Nothing will give me greater pleasure, than to concur with these to the utmost of our ability.

I have not concealed the difficulties in the way of a co-operation, because I thought it my duty fully to apprize you of them. I am persuaded, that you will ascribe what I have said to the proper motive, and to that caution, which ought always to influence enterprises pregnant with such interesting consequences. You will not impute it to an unwillingness to exert the resources of the country, or to a distrust of the event; for, I assure your Excellency, I feel the importance of this generous and seasonable succor, and have the highest hopes of its utility to the common cause, and a termination glorious to the allied arms.

I rejoice in the opportunity it affords; nor is the prospect of acting in immediate conjunction with your Excellency one of the least flattering circumstances. I shall with the greatest alacrity concur in the execution of any plan, which shall be thought advancive of the interest and glory of the two nations, and may add to the laurels you have already reaped in so distinguished a manner. I hope soon to have the pleasure of assuring you personally of those sentiments of respectful attachment, with which I have the honor to be, your Excellency's, &c.

P. S.—Mr. Holker, soon after your Excellency left Boston, communicated to me your desire to have the navigation of Hell Gate ascertained. I have taken the greatest pains to answer your views, and the result of my inquiries is, that never more than a fifty gun ship has gone thro' that passage, and this with difficulty and hazard. A larger ship it is believed could not pass. The reasons are not a want of depth of water, but the extreme narrowness of the channel, the rapidity of the current, whirlpools, and rocks. The least missteerage will precipitate the vessel on the Banks and shoals on either side, and the power which the current and whirlpools have upon larger vessels, would make it almost impossible to keep them in their proper course. The only time when this passage is practicable for ships of any burthen, is at the height of flood tide.

I have since writing the foregoing learned that the Renown of 50 guns, and not the Raisonable of 64,

conveyed the detachment to Halifax. We may therefore suppose that the Raisonable is in the harbor of New York.

TO COUNT D'ESTAING.

HEAD-QUARTERS, WEST POINT,
7 October, 1779.

SIR,

Since my letter to your Excellency, on the 4th instant, I have had the honor of a visit from his Excellency Monsieur Gerard. In the conversation we had relative to a co-operation with the fleet and troops under your command, he expressed his doubts of its being possible for you to continue such a length of time as may be essential to the success of the undertaking, and which alone could justify me in going into those extensive preparations absolutely necessary on our part. I have therefore appointed Brigadier-General Duportail and Colonel Hamilton to wait upon your Excellency as speedily as possible, and explain to you fully my ideas of the proposed co-operation; the means we shall be able to employ; the obstacles we shall have to encounter on our side; the plans which it may be proper to pursue; and the measures which are taking and may be taken by the enemy to counteract them. This will enable your Excellency to determine what you can with propriety undertake. I shall only add, that if you will engage to co-operate with your whole naval and land force against the enemy's fleet and army at New York, till the winter is so far advanced, that the ice will make it impracticable to remain with your fleet any longer

in the port, I will bring twenty-five thousand effective men into the field, and will exert all the resources of the country in a vigorous and decided co-operation. Without this assurance on the part of your Excellency, it would be inconsistent with my duty to the public, and to the common cause, to incur the expense and hazard which would be inseparable from the enterprise, and the more disagreeable consequences, which would attend a failure.

I flatter myself your Excellency will be fully sensible of the weight of the reasons on which this declaration is founded, and will approve the frankness with which it is made, and with which I have instructed General Duportail and Colonel Hamilton to disclose to you every circumstance and every consideration, with which it is necessary you should be acquainted. If your determination should be in favor of the enterprise, I request you will honor me with a line in answer to this letter, expressive of your ultimate intentions, and that you will communicate to the gentlemen, who now wait upon you, the previous measures you propose to pursue, and your sentiments of the most eligible plan of co-operation. I shall act in consequence, till the period arrives for concerting a final and more determinate plan.

I would now observe, that you may repose the most implicit confidence in General Duportail and Colonel Hamilton, and accordingly I recommend them to your kind civilities and attention. And having done this, I have only to renew the assurance of that attachment and perfect respect, with which I am, &c.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

WEST-POINT, 20 October, 1779.

MY DEAR MARQS.,

On the 30th of last month, I wrote you a letter, which in point of length would almost extend from hence to Paris—It was to have been borne to you by Colonel Fleury, to whom the relation of some particulars was referred; but the advice of Count d'Estaing's arrival at Georgia, and the hope given us by Congress of seeing him at New York, has induced this officer to suspend his voyage, to go in pursuit of fresh laurels: of course my letter to you remained on hand, and gave me an opportunity at leizure (hours) to take a copy of it, which is now sent by Monsr. de la Colombe. The original I put into the hands of Monsr. Gerard a few days ago, who gave me the honor of a visit before his departure for his native Country.

We have been in hourly expectation, for the last 15 days, of seeing Count d'Estaing off Sandy-hook. We have not heard a syllable from Charles Town in So. Carolina since the 8th of September. The accts. then mentioned, that the Count intended to make his attack the next day. Under such circumstances, you may easily form an idea of our impatience and anxiety. We are making every preparation in our power for an extensive and perfect co-operation with the fleet, (if it comes;) while the enemy, whose expectation of it keeps pace with ours, are equally vigorous in preparing for defence. They are throwing up strong works at the Narrows, both on long

Island and Staten Island. They are fortifying the point at Sandy-hook, (on which the light-Ho. stands,) and every other spot, which can contribute to the defence either of the harbor or the City. Besides which, they have already sunk eight and have 12 more large ships to sink in the channel within the light-House; and Transports are gone to Rhode Island, with the view, it is said, to take off the garrison. In a word, if they are not horribly frightened, they certainly are in horrid confusion. They work incessantly, and will, it is to be feared, render the entrance into the harbor extremely difficult, if not impracticable, if the operations to the southward should delay the Count much if any longer.

General Sullivan has compleated the entire destruction of the country of the Six Nations; driven all the Inhabitants, men, women, and children, out of it; and is at Easton on his return to join this army, with the Troops under his command. He has performed this service without losing 40 men, either by the enemy or by sickness. While the Six Nations were under this rod of correction, the Mingo and Muncy tribes, living on the Aligany, French Creek, and other waters of the Ohio above Fort Pitt, met with similar chastisemt. from Colo. Brodhead, who with 600 men advanced upon them at the same Instt., and laid waste their Country. These unexpected and severe strokes has disconcerted, humbled, and distressed the Indians exceedingly; and will, I am persuaded, be productive of great good; as they

are undeniable proofs to them, that Great Britain cannot protect them, and that it is in our power to chastise them, whenever their hostile condnct deserves it.

The embarkation, mentioned in my letter of the 30th of Septr., did actually take place, and consisted of near 6,000 men, (the flower of the British army,) under the command of Lord Cornwallis, who with these Troops sailed the 25th of that month; and two days afterwards returned, having received some Intelligence of the Count d'Estaing being on the coast of Georgia, whither, it is said, this armament was destined. They are relanded and now at N. York. The first detachment from the place, supposed to have sailed for Halifax, but in reality designed for Canada, (consisting, as I mentioned to you in my last, of the 44th compleated British, and two Hessian regiments,) met with a storm at Sea, which dispersed the transports, two of which, containing near 400 Hessians, fell into our hands, and are now in Phila.; two others returned to New York dismasted. Of the others, no acct. is yet obtained.

Before this letter reaches you, you will no doubt have heard, that Mr. Jay, (late President of Congress,) goes minister Plenipot. to the court of Madrid, and Mr. Carmichael as his Secretary; that Mr. John Adams returns to your court for special purposes, and Mr. Dana goes as his Secretary; and that Mr. John Laurens (my aid), who flew to South Carolina, when his country was in danger, is appointed secretary to Doctr. Franklin; but whether he will accept

or not, I cannot say, as I have not seen him since the month of March last.[1]

* * * * * *

It only remains for me now to beg the favor of you to present my respectful compliment to *your* (but have I not a right, as you say she has made a tender of her love to *me*, to call her *my*?) amiable & lovely Marchioness, & to assure you, that, with every sentiment of the most perfect regard and personal attachmt, I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, WEST POINT,
21st October, 1779.

SIR,

I have been honored with your Excellency's favor of the 14th, enclosing an act of Congress of the same date, expressive of their sense of the plan and execution of the expedition under the command of Major-General Sullivan. I feel it a principal satisfaction, that the discharge of my duty and the conduct of the troops should meet with the approbation of Congress. Herewith your Excellency will receive an extract of a letter from Colonel Brodhead, relative to his expedition against the Mingo & Muncy Indians, and that part of the Senecas on the Allegany River. I congratulate you on his success.

By very recent accounts from the posts at King's Ferry, it would appear that every thing is in the utmost readiness for an immediate evacuation of Ver-

[1] Colonel Laurens declined the appointment.

planck and Stony Points. It is however by no means evident, whether the evacuation is to be immediate, (tho this would rather seem the intention,) or only to be executed in case of the Count's appearing against New York. The enemy at New York continue their preparations to provide against a combined attack, and for a concentration of their whole force. They are taking measures also to render the passage to them by water as difficult as possible. A letter from Elizabeth-Town reports, that eight ships, (one of which is the Strombolo, an Indiaman,) are sunk on the buoy on the point of the East bank, an exact S. west course. Ten others are lying ready to sink, from the point of the west bank in a line to where the others terminate, leaving a space only for one ship to pass at a time."

In a letter from General Gates, of the 15th instant he writes to me :

"My intelligence from all quarters and reports from all stations announce the enemy are preparing to evacuate Newport. Monday or Tuesday it is imagined they will take their departure. A deserter from the 22d regiment, mortally wounded, but rescued by a party of our soldiers, declares, the whole of the troops now on Rhode Island are bound to the West Indies ; this may be, but I believe they will first visit New York."

This is the substance of my intelligence since my last communication with Congress. I have the honor, &c.[1]

[1] Read in Congress October 25th. Referred to Atlee, Houston, and Marchant. The evacuation of Newport took place on the 25th of October. Sir Henry Clinton wrote to Lord George Germaine, that the troops from Rhode Island arrived on the 27th, the evacuation having been executed without sacrifice, or

TO PRESIDENT REED.

WEST POINT, Oct. 22d, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

Three days ago I received your obliging favor of the 14th, and was sorry to find you had been so much indisposed. Before this, I hope you have perfectly recovered. Your early attention, and that of the Assembly, to my requisitions, have my warmest thanks; and the more so, from the situation in which they found you. I could wish, however, that the three months' service of the Militia had been made to commence only from the time of their joining the army. I need not enter into a detail of reasons for this with you, as your own judgment and experience will, I am persuaded, have already anticipated them. Your intention of leading your Militia, in case they are brought to the field, is a circumstance honorable to yourself, and flattering to me. The example alone would have its weight; but, seconded by your knowledge of discipline, abilities, activity, and bravery, it

molestation from the enemy. Soon after the order was despatched, the admiral received intelligence, through some papers taken by a privateer, which induced him to believe that the French were in possession of Halifax. His views were then altered respecting the withdrawing of the troops from Rhode Island; and, as this was originally a plan of his own, an order was issued at his suggestion to stop the evacuation, unless it was so far advanced as to render the post exposed to essential danger in case of an attack. To accomplish this object, two successive orders were sent off: the first by an armed vessel, which was taken by the enemy; the other by the Delaware frigate, which did not arrive till General Prescott had embarked with the whole garrison. "The evacuation was founded in a great measure on the prospect of Count d'Estaing's attacking that or this port, and on the necessity of securing one of them. The order for re-occupying it was chiefly in deference to the admiral's opinion that Halifax was threatened, and that the danger of that place gave importance to Rhode Island."—*MS. Letter, New York*, October 28th.

could not fail of happy effects. Men are influenced greatly by the conduct of their superiors, and particularly so, where they have both their confidence and affection.

With respect to the point to which you call my recollection, I confess, when you intimated your desire of Continental rank to me, as it passed cursorily through my mind, it struck me as a matter of indifference; or at least as one against which no important objections then occurred, inasmuch as it was to have no operation in the line. However, I must now candidly acknowledge, and I shall do it without hesitation, from motives of general duty, from a confidence in your friendship, as well as in your zeal for the public service, and from the express authority of your letter, that, having maturely weighed the subject, and examined the consequences to which it might lead, I think it cannot be obtained, either with a view to the purpose you mentioned when you first broached the point to me, or with respect to the present occasion for which the militia are called out.

The discontents, the jealousies, the uneasinesses, that have prevailed in the Army, and the complaints which have been added on acct. of rank being conferred out of the common course, are all opposed to the measure. These uneasinesses, my dear Sir, tho' not quite so prevalent among the different ranks of officers as they were, are far, very far, from being done away; and would, I fear, proceed to more than their former height, upon any supposed injury, whether real or imaginary, to what they esteemed their rights. Among

the General Officers, and those next in rank, there would be much reason to apprehend this; as they, (particularly the former,) have loudly complained on the subject of rank being given, even where motives of national policy, and indeed necessity, were urged to justify it; and reluctantly yielded to it, merely from that consideration. From hence, and as in your case this consideration could not be urged, I should fear, that it would be attended with greater disgust; not from any personal, individual objection, but from an idea, that the appointment itself materially affected their rights, and those of the officers in general. Hence it is, that I have uniformly withheld my aid to all applications for brevet commissions to foreigners and others, who had or were about to quit the service, professedly never to interfere with the line of our army.

The situation of our officers is delicate, and perhaps requires a greater degree of attention than that of any others. Deriving no emoluments from the service, but rather losing at the best, patriotism and a love of honor are the motives to their continuing in it. These must be the considerations, which influence the conduct of by far the greatest part; and tho' by these motives the officers are placed in a much more respectable point of view, than if they were governed by interest, yet the ties are not sufficiently strong to induce their submission or at least without great difficulty, to any measures they esteem injurious. For these several reasons, I cannot in policy advise to any measures, that might have a tendency

to obtain it for you. Nor do I think, after mature reflection, that the rank being given by brevet, which is contrary to the present views of Congress and to their own resolves (24th Nov., 1778, and 20 Feb., 1779), founded on the discontents which a contrary practice had created, or circumscribed in its extent by any qualifications which could be thought of, would alter the matter, or produce the least change in the sentiments of the officers. In any case, the ideas of rank and precedence would occur, and, I have too much reason to believe, would give great uneasiness. The temper of the general officers is at this moment a good deal soured. Their distresses, proceeding from the amazing depreciation of money on one hand, and a discrimination of Congress, in the allowance of subsistence, on the other, need no fresh leaven to set their discontents a working. Rank, then, being the greatest if not the only benefit they are likely to derive for their perseverance in service, and injured fortunes, they become more and more tenacious of its value, and attend the distribution of it with a watchful eye.

I have been rather prolix on this subject, but thought it incumbent on me to assign the reasons which govern my opinion; because I wish you to be convinced, that I do not want inclination to comply where I can do it consistently with any of your wishes. With very great regard and esteem, I am, dear Sir.[1]

[1] In reply to this letter President Reed said: "I am very happy that I consulted you previous to any application to Congress, who I think under all the circumstances would not have refused it; but, as I should be sorry to add to the public embarrassments, or receive any gratification, which might injure the service, I shall decline any further thoughts of the matter."

TO BENJAMIN HARRISON.

WEST POINT, 25 October, 1779.

MY DEAR SIR,

Letters of a private nature and for the mere purposes of friendly intercourse are, with me, the production of too much haste to allow time (generally speaking) to take, or make fair copies of them—and my memory (unfortunately for me) is of too defective a frame to furnish the periods at which they were written. But I am much mistaken if I have not, since I came to the present incampment wrote you a full account of the situation of things in this quarter. Your last letter to me was in May.

The Pennsylvania Gazettes which I presume you regularly receive, will have conveyed official accounts to the public of all occurrences of any importance. A repetition would be unnecessary and tedious. But it may not be amiss to observe, that excepting the plundering expedition to Virginia, and the burning one in Connecticut, the enemy have wasted another campaign (till this stage of it, at least) in their ship-bound Islands, and strong-holds, without doing a single thing advancive of the end in view, unless by delays and placing their whole dependence in the depreciation of our money, and wretched management of our finances, they expect to accomplish it.

In the meanwhile they have suffered—I do not know what other term to give it—a third part of the Continental troops, which altogether was inferior to theirs, to be employed in the total destruction of all the Country inhabited by the hostile tribes of the

Six Nations,—their good and faithful Allies! While the other two thirds, without calling upon the militia for the aid of a single man, excepting upon the Inhabitants in the vicinity of this Post (and that for a few days only) at the time Genl. Clinton moved up the river in the spring, and before we could reach it, restrained their foraging parties, confined them within very circumscribed bounds, at the same time bestowing an immensity of labor on this Post—more important to us, considered in all its consequences—than any other in America.

There is something so truly unaccountable in all this, that I do not know how to reconcile it with their own views, or to any principle of common sense but the fact is nevertheless true. The latter end of May, as I have hinted already, General Clinton moved up to King's Ferry in force, and possessed himself of Stony and Verplanks Points. Alarmed at this (for I conceived these works and the command of the river in consequence, was really the object, and the other only an advance to it) I hastened to its succor; but the return of the enemy towards the last of June, after having fortified and garrisoned the points, convinced me that that was not their design, or that they had relinquished it till their reinforcements should have arrived—since which these posts have changed masters frequently, and after employing the enemy a whole campaign, costing them near a thousand men in prisoners, by desertion, and other ways, and infinite labor, is at length in statu quo, that is, simply a Continental Ferry again.

The reinforcements from G. Britain under convoy of Adml. Arbuthnot and Sir Andw. Hammond from the best accounts we have received, amounted to about 4,000 men—mostly new recruits and sickly —many having died on their passage and since their arrival.

We are now in appearance, launching into a wide and boundless field—puzzled with mazes and o'erspread with difficulties. A glorious object is in view, and God send we may attain it—sometime ago it was much within the reach of probability ; but the season, and the incessant labor of the enemy to secure the city and harbor of New York are much opposed to us and serve to lessen my hopes in proportion as time rolls on. It is now 30 days since Congress gave me official notice of Count d'Estaing's intended co-operation, and no authentic account of him is since come to hand. The probability therefore is, that we shall have hot work in a cold season.

I have called upon Massachusetts Bay, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, for militia, and every thing being in a proper train for a capital enterprize, to the Gods and our best endeavors the event is committed.

Verplanks and Stoney Point, as I have before observed, are already evacuated, and from every account and appearance, the like will happen at Rhode Island —things being in a train for it. Their whole force then will be concentred at New York, and in regular Troops only, will amount to at least 18,000, besides seamen from near 1,000 sail of vessels of different

kinds, Refugees, and the militia of those Islands which are actually in their power, and which they have had employed on their works of defence ever since the first rumor of the French fleets being in these seas.

I have no doubt but that the Assembly of Virginia, at its last session, had cogent reasons for opening the land office; but so far as it respects the army the measure is to be lamented; for I believe, from what I have heard, that it will be a means of breaking up the Virginia line.

I have never read the act with any degree of attention, and at this time, have but an imperfect recollection of the purport of it. But in general conversation I learn from the officers, that by some clause in this or an antecedent act, those who have already taken pains, and have been at expence to secure Lands in that Country, will receive little benefit from either the one or the other, unless some requisites before Commissioners are complied with, and this they add is not to be done, (if I understand them properly) otherwise than by personal attendance. While this operates powerfully upon the minds of all those who have already taken measures to secure an interest in the new world, a desire prevails universally amongst the whole of them to become adventurers before the cream is skimmed.

I am informed that the New York Assembly which is now sitting, mean to make an offer of land to the officers and soldiers of other States, equally with their own, who may incline to take the Conti-

nental bounty in it. The policy of this measure may not be unworthy of consideration by the Assembly of Virginia. If it is conceived, that this great country will long continue to be part of the present government of that commonwealth, no measure that can be adopted will, in my opinion, give it a more vigorous growth than the opening of this door, and add more to its population, which ever has been considered the riches of a country.

To any enquiring friends you will please to make a tender of my compliments, and do me the justice to believe that in truth and sincerity, I am, dear Sir.

TO EDMUND PENDLETON.

WEST-POINT, 1 November, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

Recollecting that I am your debtor for an obliging letter, written some time last winter I will while my eyes are turned Southwardly (impatiently looking for or expecting to hear something decisive of Count d'Estaing) make my acknowledgments for it, as a proof that I am not unmindful of the favor, though I have been dilatory in thanking you for it. I shall not at this late period recount to you the occurrences of the past Campaign—I take it for granted that the public Accts. which have been officially handed to ye public have regularly reached you and are as ample as I could give. A new scene, though rather long delayed, is opening to our view, and of sufficient importance to interest the hopes and fears of every

well-wisher to his Country, and will engage the attention of all America. This I say, on a supposition that the delays to the southward and the advanced season do not prevent a full and perfect coöperation with the French fleet in this quarter. Be this as it may, every thing in the preparatory way, that depends upon me, is done and doing. To Count d'Estaing, then, and that good Providence, wch. has so remarkably aided us in all our difficulties, the rest is committed.

Stony Point, which has been a bone of contention the whole campaign, and the principal business of it on the part of the enemy, is totally evacuated by them. Rhode Island is also abandoned, and the enemy's whole force is drawn to a point at New York, where neither pains nor labor have been spar'd to secure the City and harbor; but, in their attempts to effect the latter, some unexpected disappointments have occurred (in sinking their hulks). This makes them more intent on their land batteries, wch. are so disposed as to cover the Town and the shipping equally.

All lesser matters on both sides are suspended, while we are looking to the more important object. The consequences of all these movements are not easy to be foretold. But another campaign having been wasted, having had their arms disgraced, and all their projects blasted, it may be conceiv'd that the enemy, like an enraged monster summoning his whole strength, will make some violent effort, if they should be relieved from their present apprehensions

of the French fleet. If they do not detach largely for the West Indies, (and I do not see how this is practicable, while they remain inferior at Sea,) they must, from the disagreeableness of their situation, feel themselves under a kind of necessity of attempting some bold, enterprising stroke, to give in some degree eclat to their arms, spirits to the Tories, and hope to the ministry.

But I am under no apprehension of a capital injury from any other source, than that of the continual depreciation of our Continental money. This indeed is truly alarming, and of so serious a nature, that every other effort is in vain, unless something can be done to restore its credit. Congress, the States individually, and individuals of each State, should exert themselves to effect this great end. It is the only hope, the last resource of the enemy; and nothing but our want of public virtue can induce a continuance of the war. Let them once see, that, as it is in our power, so it is our inclination and intention, to overcome this difficulty, and the idea of conquest, or hope of bringing us back to a state of dependence, will vanish like the morning dew. They can no more encounter this kind of opposition, than the hoar-frost can withstand the rays of an all-chearing sun. The liberty and safety of this country depend upon it. The way is plain, the means are in our power. But it is virtue alone that can effect it. For, without this, heavy taxes frequently collected (the only radical cure), and loans, are not to be obtained. Where this has been the policy, (in Connecticut for instance,)

the prices of every article have fallen, and the money consequently is in demand; but in the other States you can scarce get a single thing for it; and yet it is withheld from the public by speculators, while every thing that can be useful to the public is engrossed by this tribe of black gentry, who work more effectually against us than the enemy's arms; and are a hundd. times more dangerous to our liberties and the great cause we are engaged in. With much truth and regard, I am, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GATES.

WEST POINT, November 2d, 1779.

SIR,

After my Letter of yesterday was despatched, I received your Favor of the 27th ulto, from Major Armstrong, by Express from Peekskill. The Major said he had been detained by a want of Horses and bad Roads; and, being charged with despatches more immediately for Congress, he was prevented from calling on me as he wished. I regret the disappointment, as it possibly may have deprived me of information of some particulars not mentioned in your Letter.

Altho your Letter is silent upon the subject, I cannot doubt but you are on the march before this for Hartford, with all the Continental troops at least, agreable to the determination expressed in your Letter of the 15 ulto. and to mine of the 22d in answer. Indeed, I hoped the Instant the Enemy should embark, that you would push the Troops on,

and did not expect that they would go to the Island at all. Possibly you might have thought their going there for a day or two, necessary for collecting and removing the stores. If however by any means you should have deferred your march, I am to request that you will begin it, according to the plan settled between us in the course of our correspondence, without a moment's delay.

I gave you before, in consequence of what you said about garrisoning the Island with militia, my private opinion of the most I thought the State should do on the occasion. I am still of the same opinion, for the reasons I then suggested, and as I view the post in the light of trap. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

P. S. If by any possibility the Troops should not have left the Island when this comes to hand—perhaps the route thro Norwich will be more convenient for 'em to pursue and from thence along the Sound than that through Hartford. This however must be

[1] When the British evacuated Newport, it was thought advisable by some persons in Rhode Island to throw a garrison of militia into that place. General Gates had written on this subject, and Washington advised against the measure, giving as a reason, that the risk would be greater than any advantage that could result from it. He considered the object of the enemy to be a concentration of their force at New York, with the design of being prepared against a combined attack of Count d'Estaing's fleet and the American forces; but, should any thing prevent Count d'Estaing from coming to the coast, and no danger should be feared from an attack, he believed they would again turn their eyes to Newport, as a convenient harbor and position for troops. In that case they would easily defeat any number of militia that might be sent there. He advised that all the works, except a few on the water-side, should be demolished, and a small body of men only be left to guard the works that remained. Should the enemy return, the principal works would thus be lost to them, and the men, from the smallness of their number, might easily effect a retreat.

with you to determine from circumstances. Whichever way you proceed you will be pleased to inform me by the earliest opportunity that I may meet you with farther directions.

TO HENRY LAURENS.

WEST-POINT, 5 November, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I am much indebted to you for your obliging favors, of the 7th & 24th of last month, and offer my thanks for the several agreeable pieces of intelligence, contained in the latter,—No part of which, believe me, Sir, gave more sincere pleasure, than the acct. of your appointment to the States of Holland. No person, (if you will permit me to say so much,) is more impressed with the importance of those duties, which I conceive to be the objects of your mission, than you are; nor no one, whose punctuality & close attention to business affords a happier presage of success to any negotiation within the reach of our powers & reasonable expectations.

Your observations upon the resolve of Congress "to stop the press" are striking & awaken those ideas, which I entertained on this subject at the time of passing it. I reconciled myself, however, to the measure at *that* time, from the persuasion that such previous assurances had been obtained, founded in clear & demonstrable evidence, of the certainty of getting the necessary supplies by taxation & loans, as would leave nothing to *chance*. To find the

promoters of the measure impressed with doubts is not a little alarming, when we consider the consequences of a failure. A virtuous exertion in the States respectively, and in the individuals of each State, may effect a great deal. But, alas! virtue & patriotism are almost kicked out! Stockjobbing, speculating, engrossing, &c., &c., seems to be the great business of the day & of the multitude, whilst a virtuous few struggle, lament, & suffer in silence, tho I hope not in vain.

Your state of matters, respecting the cloathing department, is not less distressing. What a pity it is, that the work of to-day should be postponed a week! a month! a year! when not a possible good, but much evil, is the inevitable consequence of it! Our solicitude on acct. of the operations at Savanna may easily be conceived, when I add, that we have not heard a tittle from thence since the receipt of your obliging letter of the 24th; and our anxiety for European news is little inferior. The present æra is big of events. We turn an impatient eye to the Seaboard, looking for the arrival of the French fleet; & begin to apprehend much from the Season, &c. It would be a most desirable thing to be ascertained of the extent of Count d'Estaing's intentions in this quarter, that not more than correspondant preparations may be made. At present our situation is awkward & expensive.[1]

[1] "We have waited so long in anxious expectation of the French fleet at the Hook, without hearing any thing from it, or of it, since its first arrival at Georgia, that we begin to fear that some great convulsion in the earth has caused a

Nothing new has happened in these parts, since the evacuation of Rhode Island. Reports indeed, inform us, that the Troops of that garrison did not disembark at New York; but, receiving an augmentation of Hessians, proceeded to the Hook, and from thence to Sea. Of the truth of this, & of the transports wooding and watering, I shall soon have authentic accts.

I persuade myself, that it is unnecessary for me to have recourse to assurances in proof of the sincere pleasure, with wch. I should receive my worthy aid, Colonel Laurens. It is an event, however, I have little expected, since I have heard of his late appointment; nor shall I suffer a selfish wish to come into the scale of determination. His abilities, in whatever station they are employed, will render essential services to his country. My attachment, therefore, to him, or any desire of benefiting by his aid, shall not weigh in the balance. For his past services & attention to me, he will ever have my warmest thanks; for his honor, happiness, & advancement in life, my unfeigned wishes. These, in every step you take, in every station in life to which you may be called, will

chasm between this and that state that can not be passed; or why, if nothing is done, or doing, are we not informed of it? There seems to be the strangest fatality, and the most unaccountable silence attending the operations to the southward that can be conceived, every measure in this quarter is hung in the most disagreeable state of suspense—and despair of doing any thing, advanced as the season is, and uncertainty of the count's co-operating to any extent, if he should come, is succeeding fast to the flattering ideas we but lately possessed.

"Nothing new has taken place since the evacuation of Rhode Island, excepting a preparation of transports at New York, sufficient for the embarkation of about four thousand men, which, it is said, Lord Cornwallis is to command. The destination of them is at present unknown, but conjectured to be for the West Indies."—*Washington to John Parke Custis*, 10 November, 1779.

also attend you, as I can with truth assure you, that, with the greatest esteem and regard, I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL DUPORTAIL AND LIEUTENANT-COLONEL HAMILTON.

HEAD-QRS., West Point, 11 November, 1779.

GENTN.,

Being absent from Head-Qrs. on a visit to several out-posts of the army, when your favor of the 2d instant arrived, and not returning till last night, it was not in my power to answer it before. I am precisely in the predicament you are, with respect to the Count, his intentions, or ultimate operations. I have not heard a single syllable about either since your departure, except what was transmitted in my Letter of the 30th ulto., a similar account to which you will have seen in the public prints. From this circumstance, and the lateness of the season, I do not expect that he will arrive in this quarter, or, if he should, that the Enterprise which he proposed could now be prosecuted. It is too late to begin it. However, as I received my advices from Congress, of the Count's intention to coöperate, and considered myself as bound by their direction to prepare for it, I have not thought myself at liberty to desist from my preparations, or to fix upon a day when they should cease. I have written to them to-day upon the subject, stating the incertainty I am under with respect to His Excellency's coming, the great expense which must necessarily attend the continuing of our measures for a coöperation, and the difficulties, supposing it under-

taken, from the advanced season; and requested their earliest decision, as to the part I am to pursue. I have also requested the favor of General Schuyler, who is at Congress, to transmit to you the Result of their deliberations upon the occasion, as soon as they are ended; by which you will be pleased to govern yourselves, either as to your returning or remaining, as their decision may point. In the mean time You will withhold all my despatches to the Count, even if he should arrive, till you receive their answer, and endeavor to recover such as may have been lodged by you or others along the Coast towards the Capes of Delaware. I have written to Major Lee, with respect to the Letters in his hands.

When you have received the determination of Congress, if it is against a Coöperation, it will be necessary for you to recall the pilots, except such a number as may be thought material for general purposes in case of the Count's arrival, for the security of his Fleet, and such as were employed here, or immediately in consequence of any of my Letters, you will desire to send in their accounts. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

WEST POINT, 14 November, 1779.

SIR,

In my letter of the 4th, ulto., which I had the honor of addressing Congress, I informed them of the

[1] General Duportail and Colonel Hamilton had left Lewistown, where they had first taken their station to watch for Count d'Estaing, and were at Great Egg Harbor when this letter was written.

measures I had adopted for a co-operation with his Excellency the Count d'Estaing, in consequence of their act and favor of the 26th & 27th of the preceding month. Besides the measures which I then mentioned, several others which appeared to me essential for the occasion, and which would be naturally expected of me, have been pursued, and every disposition made, which our circumstances would admit and which the importance of the object in view, necessarily required. When I was first honored with the despatches of Congress on the subject of a co-operation with the Count, I hoped as Congress themselves must have done, that the operations at the southward would have been soon over, so as to have permitted his Excellency to have proceeded with his fleet and land forces in a short time after his arrival there to this coast, and, on this ground, that something important and interesting, if not decisive, might be attempted against the enemy in this quarter, with a good prospect of success; but the operations there having continued so long and hitherto prevented him from coming, I now beg leave to offer it to Congress, as my opinion, that the Count's arrival, even if it were to take place immediately, would be too late on account of the advanced season for any extensive operation, or at least any that might require time and materially depend on our joint aid. In this view of matters, without taking notice of the incertainty in which we still are, with respect to southern affairs, and of consequence as to the precise time, when his Excellency might arrive, I would submit to Congress

to decide, whether we shall continue measures for a co-operation, or relinquish all ideas of it for the present time without farther delay. I do not conceive myself authorised to determine the point, but I will take the liberty to observe, that the latter from every consideration of the subject, will, as it strikes me, be most for our interest, and for the interest and honor of the common cause. We are now on the eve of winter, and enterprises which might have bid fair for a successful and happy issue, if they could have been begun some time ago, and matters put all in train, would at best if commenced now, stand upon very precarious and uncertain footing; and the more so, as the execution would depend on troops but illy appointed and clad, and a great proportion of these, militia, unaccustomed to the hardships of the field, and who therefore, would be less able and less disposed to persevere against the rigors and difficulties which would unavoidably occur from the inclemency of the season. The enemy too have had great time for preparation, and their stores of fuel and forage, &c., and their defences are infinitely more compleat than they would have been found, if we could have begun our operations at a more early period. The state of our flour supplies, also, is much more opposed to a co-operation than was expected: they are now distressing and from recent reports by the Commissary General, it is much to be feared, that they may become so in the extreme. Our distress, on this head, at this instant, arises, in a great measure, from a long drought; but, this aside, the Commissary

says he finds every day new and greater difficulties attending the business of supplies, from a more unhappy cause. * * *[1]

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD QUARTERS, WEST POINT,
18 November, 1779.

SIR,

As the present campaign is advancing towards a conclusion, and the Counsels of the British Cabinet, so far as they have come to my knowledge, are far from recognising our Independence and pointing to an honorable peace, I have thought it might not be amiss for me to lay before Congress a state of the army (notwithstanding it is frequently transmitted to the Treasury Board, I believe by a return of the muster-Rolls, and to the War Office monthly in a more general view), as it is with Congress to decide

[1] Read in Congress, November 18th.

On the day after this letter was written Major Clarkson brought advices from the south that the siege of Savannah had occupied a longer time than had been anticipated, and there being no certainty of reducing the place in a short time by regular approaches, an assault had been made on the 9th, which proved unsuccessful from a failure to carry out the plan of attack as laid down. Washington thought the assault had been decided upon because of D'Estaing's engagements in the West Indies; but it was done because the French admiral was unwilling to expose his fleet on a dangerous coast to the autumnal storms. D'Estaing was twice wounded and Pulaski mortally. Immediately on receipt of this intelligence, Washington abandoned all idea of a co-operation with the French, and wrote to Gates on the 16th:

"It remains now to put the army in such a chain of winter Cantonments, as will give security to these posts, and to take a position with the remainder, which will afford Forage and subsistence, and which will at the same time preserve us from the insults of the collected force of the enemy. These several matters are now in contemplation, and untill they are determined, you will be pleased to halt the troops at Danbury. Should they have passed that place

on the expediency of making it more respectable, or of fixing its amount to any particular point. The return I have the honor to enclose, is an abstract taken from the muster-Rolls of the Troops of each State in Octor. (South Carolina & Georgia excepted), and contains a compleat view, not only of the whole strength of the forces of each, and of the Independent Corps, &c., at that time, but of the different periods for which they stood engaged. I conceived a return of this sort might be material, and accordingly directed it to be made, the better to enable Congress to govern their views and requisitions to the several States. They will perceive by this, that our whole force, including all sorts of Troops, non-commissioned officers and privates, Drummers and Fifers, supposing every man to have existed and to have been in service at that time, a point however totally inadmissible, amounted to 27,099. That of

before this reaches you, you will halt them on the most convenient Ground, till you hear farther from me."

To save expense and an unnecessary consumption of provision he ordered the New York and Massachusetts militia that had been called out, to be dismissed. To Schuyler, now in Congress, he wrote on the 24th of November:

"The Resolution, which you allude to, has reached me. You will see by my official Letter of this date to Congress, that after receiving their letter, with a Copy of Genl. Lincoln's despatches, I did not wait for their decision on the point submitted. These despatches, and a copy of the act from the Marine Committee, for the sailing of the Three Frigates, which had been detained for a coöperation, seemed explicit as to the line of conduct to be pursued. The Disaster at Savannah puts matters, at least, on a delicate footing in the south. I do not know what we can do more. You will have seen, before this, a particular state of the army, transmitted in my public Letter of the 18th. Our finances depreciation, &c., are alarming. We have much to apprehend from them, if they are not remedied.

"I have touched upon the subject of the Commissary. I thank you for the hint, as I shall for every other you may be pleased to favor me with."

this number, comprehending 410 Invalids, 14,998 are stated as engaged for the War; that the remainder, by the expiration of Enlistments, will be decreased by the 31st of December 2,051; by the last of March 6,426; by the last of April (including the levies) 8,181; by the last of June 10,158; by the last of Septr. 10,709; and by different periods, I believe shortly after, 12,157.[1]

As I have observed, it cannot be supposed, that the whole of the Troops borne upon the muster-Rolls were either in service, or really in existence; for it will ever be found, for obvious reasons, that the amount of an army on Paper will greatly exceed its real strength. Hence there are other deductions than those enumerated above, and which must equally operate against the troops of every class; and I must farther beg leave to observe, that, besides these several deductions, there are of necessity very considerable and constant drafts of men from the regiments for artificers, armorers, matrosses, Wagoners, and the Quarter-Master's Department, &c; so that we cannot estimate our operating force in the Field, with any propriety or justice, by any means as high as it may appear at first view on Paper. This point might be more fully illustrated by referring to the column of *present fit for duty*, in all general returns, and comparing it with the total amount. Nor is there any reason to expect, that these large and heavy drafts from the regiments will cease; but on the contrary it is much to be feared, from the increased and increas-

[1] The troops from the several States enlisted for different periods of time.

ing difficulties in getting men, that they will be still greater.

Having shown what would be the ultimate and greatest possible amount of our force at the several periods above mentioned, according to the abstract of the muster-Rolls for October, supposing every man borne upon them to have been there and that they would remain in service, agreeable to the terms noted in the abstract, which however is by no means supposable, as already observed, I shall take the liberty, with all possible deference, to offer my sentiments on the only mode that appears to me competent, in the present situation of things, to placing and keeping our Battalions on a respectable footing, if Congress judge the measure essential; and I trust, in doing this, it will not be deemed that I have exceeded my duty. If it should, my apology must be that it proceeded from a desire to place the business of raising the Levies, we may have occasion to employ in future, on a more regular and certain system than has been adopted, or at least put in practice; and one by which the public will derive benefits from their service.

In the more early stages of the contest, when men might have been enlisted for the war, no man, as my whole conduct and the uniform tenor of my letters will evince, was ever more opposed to short enlistments than I was; and, while there remained a prospect of obtaining Recruits upon a permanent footing in the first instance, as far as duty and a regard to my station would permit, I urged my senti-

ments in favor of it. But the prospect of keeping up an army by voluntary enlistments being changed, or at least standing on too precarious and uncertain a footing to depend on for the exigency of our affairs, I took the liberty, in February, 1778, in a particular manner to lay before the Committee of Arrangement, then with the army at Valley Forge, a plan for an annual draft, as the surest and most certain, if not the only means left us, of maintaining the army on a proper and respectable ground. And, more and more confirmed in the propriety of this opinion by the intervention of a variety of circumstances unnecessary to detail, I again took the freedom of urging the plan to the Committee of conference in January last; and having reviewed it in every point of light and found it right, or at least the best that has occurred to me, I hope I shall be excused by Congress in offering it to them, and in time for carrying it into execution for the next year, if they should conceive it necessary for the States to compleat their quotas of troops.

The plan I would propose is, that each State be informed by Congress annually of the *real deficiency* of its Troops, and called upon to make it up, or such less specific number as Congress may think proper, by a draft; That the men drafted join the army by the 1st of January, and serve till the 1st of January in the succeeding year; That from the time the drafts join the army, the officers of the States from which they come, be authorized and directed to use their endeavors to enlist them for the war, under

the bounties to the officers themselves and the recruits granted by the act of the 23d of January last, viz., Ten Dollars to the officers for each recruit, and two hundred to the recruits themselves; That all State, County, & Town bounties to drafts, if practicable, be entirely abolished, on account of the uneasiness and disorders they create among the soldiery, the desertions they produce, and for other reasons, which will readily occur; That, on or before the 1st of October annually, an abstract or return similar to the present one, be transmitted to Congress, to enable them to make their requisitions to each State with certainty and precision. This I would propose as a general plan to be pursued; and I am persuaded that this, or one nearly similar to it, will be found the best now in our power, as it will be attended with the least expense to the Public, will place the service on the footing of order and certainty, and will be the only one that can advance the general interest to any great extent. If the plan is established, besides placing the service on the footing of more order and certainty, than it will ever otherwise have, we shall, I should hope, by the exertions of the officers be able to increase the number of our Troops on permanent engagements for the war; especially if we should be so fortunate as to be in a condition to hold out to the drafts, that would engage, a certainty of their receiving the bounty Cloathing stipulated by the Public to be furnished to the Troops, and which is so essential to the interest of both. Cloathing is now become a superior temptation—and if we were in circumstances

to hold it out, and the drafts were sure that they would obtain it, as they enlisted and that it would be regularly furnished as it became due—there are good grounds to believe from what has been experienced, and the reports of the Officers that many would readily engage for the War. From these considerations and as it is so highly essential to the advancement of the Public interest, both as we regard the issue of the contest—and œconomy in men and money,—I would hope, that every practicable measure will be pursued to get ample and compleat supplies of Cloathing. And I will take the liberty to add, that the diminution of the Army, by the expiration of the inlistments of a part of the Troops, according to the foregoing state, should not in my opinion, lessen the calculations and estimates of supplies, in any degree; but that they should be made under the idea of the whole of the Battalions being complete. When this is done, events may, and some probably will occur, by which the supplies, as they do not depend upon internal manufactures may be diminished—and scarcely any can arise which can make them burthensome on our hands. A want will and must from the nature of things, be attended with very injurious consequences at least—A full quantity with none at all, but with almost innumerable interesting benefits. Besides the prospect we should have of gaining Recruits for the War by having good supplies of Cloathing, which as already observed, is become a first inducement to service—We shall as has ever been the case be obliged to

make some issues to the drafts—as well from principles of humanity—as to get their service. I have been thus long on the subject of ample supplies of Cloathing, as it is scarcely to be conceived the distresses and disadvantages—that flow from a deficiency. For instance nothing can be more injurious or discouraging, than our having only four thousand nine hundred Blankets to distribute to the whole Army—and so of many other articles in but little better proportion.

The advantages of a well-digested, general, and uniform system for levying and bringing them to the army at a particular time to serve to a fixed period are obvious. We may then form our plans of operation with some degree of certainty, and determine with more propriety and exactness on what we may or may not be able to do; and the periods for joining and serving, which I have taken the liberty to mention, appear to me the most proper for a variety of considerations. It being in January when it is proposed that the recruits shall join, and when the Enemy cannot operate, they will get seasoned and accustomed in some measure to a camp life, before the Campaign opens, and will have four or five months to acquire discipline and some knowledge of manœuvres without interruption; and their service being extended to the same time in the succeeding Year, the Public will have all the benefits that can be derived from their aid for a whole campaign. According to the plan on which the business has been conducted, the Public incurs a very heavy

expense, on account of recruits (all that the one proposed is liable to), and scarcely receives any benefit from them. The Levies, that have been raised, have come to the army so irregularly, that the aid they were intended to give has never been received, or at least but to a very limited and partial extent; and the time, for which they were engaged, has been spent in gaining a seasoning to camp and discipline, when they ought to have been in the field; or they must have been sent there raw and untutored, (a circumstance, which may lead in some critical moment before an Enemy to most fatal consequences,) and the greater part of it has been spent in Winter Quarter. The abstract with its remarks will show Congress when the recruits for this campaign joined, and of what little importance their aid could have been, if the Enemy had not been prevented by the occurrence of a variety of distant events, as providential as they were fortunate for us, from pursuing the vigorous measures there was but too much reason to believe they would have otherwise been capable of, and on which it seemed they had determined. I am, Sir, &c.

P. S. From several parts of my letter Congress will conclude, that it must have been intended to have reached them before this. The fact was so the greater part of it having been drafted early in Septr. —but unfortunately from the dispersed situation of the Troops—I could not obtain the Abstract of the Muster Rolls, to shew their state, with any degree of precision, till within these four days.—

TO MAJOR-GENERAL ROBERT HOWE.

WEST POINT, 20 November, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

Herewith you will receive Mr. Pulteney's lucubrations, and my thanks for the perusal of them.[1] He has made, I perceive, the dependence of America essential to the existence of Great Britain, as a powerful nation. This I shall not deny, because I am in sentiment with him in thinking her fallen state in consequence of the separation, too obvious to be disputed. It was of magnitude sufficient to have made a wise and just people look before they leaped. But I am glad to find that he has placed the supplies necessary to support that dependence upon three things which I am persuaded will never again exist in his nation—namely, public virtue, public economy, and public union in her grand council.

Stock jobbing, speculation, dissipation, luxury and venality, with all their concomitants, are too deeply rooted to yield to virtue and the public good. *We* that are not yet hackneyed in vice—but infants, as it were, in the arts of corruption, and the knowledge of taking advantage of public necessity (tho' I am much mistaken if we shall not soon become very great adepts at them) find it almost, if not quite impossible to preserve virtue enough to keep the body politic and corporate in tolerable tune. It is scarcely to be expected therefore that a people who have reduced these things to a system and have actually interwoven them

[1] *Thoughts on the Present State of Affairs with America, and the Means of Conciliation*, a very popular pamphlet in its day, which ran through many editions.

into their constitution should at once become immaculate.

I do not know which rises highest—my indignation or contempt, for the sentiments which pervade the ministerial writings of this day—these hireling scribblers labor to describe and prove the ingratitude of America in not breaking faith with France—& returning to her allegiance to the Crown of Great Britain after its having offered such advantageous terms of accommodation. Such sentiments as these are insulting to common sense and affrontive to every principle of sound policy and common honesty. Why has she offered these terms?—because after a bloody contest, carried on with unrelenting and savage fury on her part the issue (which was somewhat doubtful while we stood alone) is now become certain by the aid we derive from our Alliance. Notwithstanding the manifest advantages of which, and the blood and treasure which has been spent to resist a tyranny which was unremitted as long as there remained a hope of subjugation, we are told with an effrontery altogether unparelleled that every cause of complaint is now done away by the generous offers of a tender parent—that it is ungrateful in us not to accept the proffered terms, and impolitic not to abandon a power (dangerous I confess to her but) which held out a saving hand to us in the hour of our distress. What epithet does such sentiments merit? How much should a people possessed of them be despised? From my soul I abhor them! A manly struggle, had it been conducted upon liberal ground, and honest confession that they were unequal to conquest, and

wished for our friendship, would have had its proper weight—but their cruelties, exercised upon those who have fallen within their power—the wanton depredations committed by themselves and their faithful allies, the Indians—their low and dirty practices of counterfeiting our money—forging letters—and condescending to adopt such arts as the meanest villain in private life would blush at being charged with, has made me their fixed enemy.

I have received your letter by Colo. Moylan of yesterday's date. The instructions given to —— are full and compleat—I have no thought of withdrawing the effective horse till the other troops go into quarters. I am &c.

TO GOVERNOR JEFFERSON.

HEAD-QUARTERS, WEST-POINT,
23 November, 1779.

DR. SIR,

I have been honored with your Excellency's favors of the 1st, 2nd and 8th of October and the several enclosures.

The measure of the Council in remanding Governor Hamilton and his companions back to confinement, on their refusal to sign the parole tendered them, is perfectly agreeable to the practice of the enemy. The particular part objected to, I have always understood, enters into the paroles given by our officers.[1] In regard to your letter of the 8th, I

[1] A parole was drawn up and presented to Governor Hamilton and his companions, by which they were to pledge themselves not to offer any offence to the United States either by actions or language. They refused to subscribe

would hope with your Excellency, that there will be no necessity for cruelty with the enemy. Indeed, it is but justice to observe, that of late, or rather since Sir Henry Clinton has had the command, the treatment of our prisoners has been more within the line of humanity, and in general very different from that which they experienced under his predecessors. I shall not fail, however, as a matter of duty, to pay proper attention to such deviations from this conduct, as may appear the result of mere wantonness or cruelty, and that have not been incurred by the irregularities of our prisoners.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

WEST POINT, 24 November, 1779.

SIR,

* * * * * *

I am now using my best endeavors to get things in train for putting the army in quarters. The distribution of cloathing, owing to its late arrival, the scanti-

this parole, insisting that they should be allowed entire freedom of speech. Upon this refusal, they were remanded to prison; but they afterwards subscribed the parole, and were released from confinement. Mr. Jefferson wrote: "Lamothe and Dejean have given their paroles, and are at Hanover Court-House. Hamilton, Hay, and four others are still obstinate. They are therefore still in close confinement. I wrote full information of this matter to General Phillips, from whom I had received letters on the subject. I cannot in reason believe, that the enemy, on receiving this information, will venture to impose any new distresses upon our officers in captivity with them. It is my duty, as well as it was my promise to the Virginia captives, to take measures for discovering any change, which may be made in their situation. For this purpose I must apply for your Excellency's interposition."

ness of the stock, the diversity in color and in quality, its not having been properly assorted when packed, and the absence of cloathiers under various pretences for getting articles that would be deficient, has proved a source of the most irksome delay and difficulty. Owing to those causes, and Two Rainy days, the North Carolina Troops could not move from Windsor till yesterday, notwithstanding the most active exertions of Colo. Clarke, who commands them, and all parties engaged, to effect it. I hope, however, that what clothing was here, and to be distributed here, will be so delivered by to-morrow evening, that all Troops, except those intended for the garrison, will be able to move towards the places destined for their cantonment without more delay.

In fixing on these, we are obliged to regard in a particular manner the security of this post, the security of the army, the best protection circumstances will admit of to the Country, our supplies of provisions and Forage, and the means of transportation. From the fullest consideration of the point it appears, that these objects in a combined view will be best answered by quartering the Cavalry in Connecticut; a Brigade at Danbury; a sufficient Garrison here, including the post at King's Ferry and the Continental village, to secure them at least against any sudden attempts on the part of the Enemy; a small body of Troops at the entrance of the Clove; the main body of the army in the Country in the neighborhood of the Scot's plains, if the circumstances of wood and water will admit. The Qr.-Master-General and other offi-

cers are now advanced & employed, & have been for some days, in reconnoitring for a proper position. The instant matters will permit, I shall go forward myself.[1]

I have been informed by Report that Colo. Wadsworth, the Commissary-General, means to resign his Office—and has limitted a day for it not very remote. I would take the liberty to suggest, if he is not really to continue in office—and the period when he will leave it, is not distant—that too early an attention cannot be paid, in providing for the contingency. The business of other departments may admit of some procrastinations and delays, and they may make shifts for a little time that may keep matters agoing; but the business of this, being to satisfy the demands of a nature in the Article of food, nothing can answer these but actual supplies. These cannot be interrupted—and whenever they are checked, even to a small degree, the consequences are disagreeable. If Colo. Wadsworth does decline the Office I only wish his successor may feed the Army as well as he has done. I think it my duty to say in justice to him—that since he acted in the Office, the Army has not known the least want till the present and now in the Article of bread only. For this it has been streighten'd for Eight or Ten days past, owing, I am convinced not to a want of exertion on his part but to a long and uncommon drought and the great quantity

[1] The command at West Point, after the removal of Washington's headquarters, was offered to General Gates, but he expressed a wish to be absent for a few months in Virginia, on account of his private affairs. His request was granted, and General Heath was appointed to command at West Point.

of flour required for another purpose. This distress, however, by the late rain—I hope will be at least relieved for the present. A continuation of supplies will depend upon other sources. * * *

I have, &c.[1]

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

PEEK'S KILL, 29 November, 1779.

SIR,

Since I had the honor of addressing Your Excellency on the 20th I have received sundry reports, tho' not through the Channels I could have wished, and yet thro' such as seem to make the Reports worthy of credit, that the Enemy are making or preparing for a pretty considerable embarkation of troops from New York. From this circumstance, altho' their destination is not known, and from the importance of securing the States of Georgia and South Carolina, which possibly may be their object, and which, from the accounts I have received from Col. Laurens, are in a more defenceless condition than I had even apprehended, I have determined, illy as they can be spared, to put the whole of the Virginia troops in motion, except those whose terms of service will expire by the last of January, to give them farther succor, if Congress shall judge it expedient, after considering the full state and extent of our force, as communicated in my Letter of the 18th. I am full of opinion, that this detachment can

[1] Read in Congress, December 1, 1779.

be illy afforded; but possibly, from the disagreeable consequences that might result from the Enemy's gaining possession of these two States, or even of attempting it, it may be advisable to hazard a good deal for their security. At any rate, from the unhappy reduction of our force by the expiration of enlistments, we should be obliged to pursue great caution for our security; and, if this detachment is made, it will be necessary to increase it, and to act if possible on a more defensive plan.

From the great distance from hence to Charles Town, from Virginia's lying in the way, and from the inclement season, I am persuaded, if the troops proceed by land, that their number, by fatigue, sickness, desertion, and the expiration of their enlistments, will be so reduced, that their aid would be scarcely of any consideration when they arrived. In this view, and as their going will deprive the army here of a material part of its force, I cannot think, if Congress should determine the measure expedient, that they should proceed by Land. I am satisfied a Land march would exhaust the whole of the detachment, and that but little if any aid would be derived from it to the Southern Army, if it were to proceed in this way. From these considerations Congress will be pleased to determine, how far it may be advisable and practicable to send the Troops by Sea. A boisterous season, Winds generally blowing off the continent, and the risk of capture, are all circumstances, I will take the liberty to observe, that appear to me of importance in deciding the point. Without a good

convoy I should apprehend the measure would at any rate be unadvisable, as the capture or loss of the Troops would give a severe shock to our affairs, and such as we should not recover without difficulty.

How far this may be practicable will be with Congress to determine. If it can be obtained, and Congress think this detachment should be sent, yet I would take the liberty to suggest farther, that the Troops had better sail from the Chesapeake Bay, than from the Delaware, as they will be more distant from New York, and of consequence not so liable to fall in with any of the enemy's ships and cruisers.

And as it frequently happens at this season, that Vessels are blown off the coast and kept at sea for a considerable time, I should suppose it would be necessary for the Transport Vessels to be provisioned, wooded, & watered at least for six weeks. A passage may be effected perhaps in a few days, but provision should be made against contingencies; and in doing this it may be material to consider the state of our supplies, and whether they will admit of so large a quantity being shipped. It also appears to me, if the embarkation is made, that it should be in Transports employed solely for the purpose; as events possibly might arise, if they were on board other Vessels, which might render it at least inconvenient for them to proceed. I am now thus far on my way to Jersey, and shall put the Virginia Troops in motion, as soon as it can be done, for Philadelphia. Congress will please to have, against their arrival, such instructions ready as they may

deem necessary with respect to their farther movements. I have the honor to be, &c.

P. S. As it appears to me for the reasons above that we cannot attempt to succor Georgia and South Carolina, by a land march of Troops and it will at least take several days before the arrangement of Transports—Convoy—Provisions &c. can be made—I have concluded not to move the Troops till I hear from Congress on these subjects and in the mean time shall hold the Troops in readiness and employ them in building Huts.[1]

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, MORRISTOWN,
7 December, 1779.

SIR,

I have the honor to inform Congress, that I have received a letter from a confidential correspondent in New York, dated the 27th of November, containing the following paragraph.

"The Men-of-War at the Hook have taken in water for several months, and on friday the Admiral went down with all his Baggage. A fleet for Cork and a number of Vessels for England will sail in a few days, some of which are loaded with valuable Cargoes. However, some think that they will not sail till D'Estaing has left the Coast, or till there is some arrival from England. Privateering is now almost over, not more than six now out and few fitting. There have not any prizes of Value arrived for some time past."

The circumstance of the two fleets destined for England and Ireland, is also mentioned by Major

[1] Read in Congress, December 4th.

Lee. He sends me a list of the enemy's naval force as follows: At the Hook The Russel and Robuste 74's The Europa, Defiance, and Raisonable 64's. The Roebuck of 44 and two smaller Frigates. The Renown of 50 and Romulus of 44 at New York. I understand he forwarded a similar list to Congress. As I have not before heard of the Defiance I am in doubt whether there may not be a mistake with respect to her.

But the most important part of the first mentioned letter relates to the indefatigable endeavors of the enemy to increase the depreciation of our currency by increasing its quantity in Counterfeits. It asserts, as a matter of certainty, that Reams of the paper made for the last emissions struck by Congress have been procured from Philadelphia. The writer had taken much but fruitless pains to detect the [persons] concerned. He observes that the enemy have great hopes of terminating the War in their favor in another Campaign, as they expect, confidently, the entire ruin of our money and a failure of provisions for the Supply of the Army. The prevailing opinion, he says, among the most knowing in New York is, that a considerable part of the Army will be sent to Georgia, as soon as it is known that the French Fleet has left the coast; and it is thought by some, that several Regiments will go to the West Indies. He speaks of the arrival of a packet, which left Falmouth the 7th of September, posterior to the period to which the different accounts refer the engagement between the fleets, and which brings no intelligence of such an

event. Your Excellency's letter of the 2d Inst. is come to hand. I have the honor to be, &c.

P. S. The very critical situation of the Army made still more critical by the proposed detachment to the Southward induces me to take the liberty of again intreating the attention of Congress to the Subject of my letter of the 18th last month. Several of the Assemblies are now sitting and if the requisitions of Congress do not reach them before they rise, the delay on assembling them will protract our succors to a period which may leave us absolutely at the discretion of the Enemy. The Army daily dissolving will be so weak in the early part of Spring, that without proportionable reinforcements, if the enemy keep their present collected force they will have it in their power to take such advantage of our situation as may be fatal to our affairs. There is indeed a probability of their making detachments, but there is far from being a certainty. Though it should be their present intention (against which however many cogent reasons may be assigned) to operate to the Southward, they would be very likely to abandon it on finding we had transported to that quarter a force sufficient to defeat their attempts. In this case they may send a few Regiments to their Islands and still retain a force very formidable to our Weakness. Should we experience any disasters, we must dread the consequences at this delicate period of our currency; and that we should experience the most serious disasters we can have little doubt when we reflect that we should be too weak and too much divided to resist the enemy

in the posts we are obliged to occupy, and too much fettered by the difficulty of transportation and supplies to avoid them and reunite our force—If not a moment should be lost, the Recruits will hardly join the Army before the Month of April—It is therefore evidently of the greatest importance that no delay should be incurred—For my own part, I confess my anxiety on the subject is extreme.[1]

TO GOVERNOR JEFFERSON.

HEAD QUARTERS, MORRISTOWN,
11 December, 1779.

SIR,

I have the honor to inform your Excellency that I have received advice from New York that a very large embarkation had taken place (said to amount to 8000), and that the fleet containing them was at the Hook on the point of sailing—their destination *reported* to be for Chesapeak Bay, on a combined opera-

[1] "From the Silence of our Articles of War with respect to the right, which parties in arrest have, of challenging or objecting to Members of Courts Martials I would beg leave to submit the point to the consideration of Congress, and to request, that they will be pleased to decide—Whether the parties have such a right.—Whether it may be exercised in all or in what cases.—To what extent as to number, challenges may be made:—Whether they may be peremptory, or must be special, assigning causes—and whether the parties have the privilege of making both. These are points which appear to me necessary for forming a part of our Military code—and which can only be defined and fixed by Congress. And I will take the liberty to add, that the important trials coming on, make me solicitous for a very early determination. I have consulted many of the General Officers of the Army upon the occasion—and it seems to be a matter generally agreed—that the practice of Armies admits challenges of both sorts; but we have no rule fixing their extent or the cases in which they may be made."—*Washington to the President of Congress*, 8 December, 1779.

tion in the 1st place against the French squadron there, and afterwards, to attempt the rescue of the Convention troops. Their naval force may consist of five sail of the line and two frigates of 44's, besides a 50 gun ship. The separation of the French squadron mentioned by our last accounts from the southward, may have been a temptation to the enemy to undertake an enterprise against that part which had arrived. But it is not perhaps very probable that the Convention troops enter into the plan ; nevertheless I think it prudent to communicate the intelligence to your Excellency, that you may have the goodness to direct your attention towards their security, and take any precautions which may appear to you necessary without conveying an alarm. For this purpose I request the favor of you to give immediate information to the officer commanding at Charlottesville.

By the report of a deserter, and the firing of signal guns, a great part of yesterday, I am led to conclude the fleet sailed at that time.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL LINCOLN, IN SOUTH CAROLINA.

HEAD QUARTERS, MORRIS TOWN,
12 December, 1779.

MY DEAR SIR,

I had the pleasure of receiving yours of the 22d October, by Colo. Laurens, to whose information I am indebted for a very particular account of the situation of affairs to the southward. I had previous to his arrival been furnished by Congress with copies of

your despatches by Major Clarkson, who came forward himself to Head-Quarters. I had the mortification of hearing of the ill success of the allied arms before Savannah. While I regret the misfortune, I feel a very sensible pleasure in contemplating the gallant behavior of the officers and men of the french and american army; and it adds not a little to my consolation to learn, that instead of the mutual reproaches, which too often follow the failure of enterprises depending upon the coöperation of troops of different nations, their confidence in and esteem for each other is increased. I am happy in believing, that the delicacy and propriety of your conduct upon every occasion has contributed much to this agreeable circumstance.

Before Colo. Laurens's arrival, the two Regiments of North Carolina had marched; and immediately upon finding, from your letters and from him, the reduced state of your Continental force, and the little dependence to be put upon the precarious supplies of militia, I submitted to Congress the propriety of detaching the whole of the Virginia line; expressing at the same time my willingness to part with them, illy as they could be spared, should they judge it expedient, after a full consideration of all circumstances. Congress having determined upon the propriety of the measure, the troops began to march the day before yesterday; and I hope the whole will be in motion this day, should not the weather prevent them. I have strongly recommended the transportation of them by water, if Vessels can be procured, and a

Convoy ensured. The advantages of this over a march by land are too obvions to need mentioning. The unhappy system of short enlistments operates just now most forcibly upon the troops in question, as well as upon the whole line of the army, altho. the total amount of the Virginians is at present upward of 2,500. I do not imagine it will be practicable to move more than Rank and file to South Carolina as the times of the remainder would expire by their arrival at Charlestown—About 150 of the two State Regiments had been reenlisted last Winter upon promise of a furlough this Winter. I shall take the liberty, in my turn, of referring you to Colo. Laurens for a minute account of our circumstances and situation; and I am happy in having the testimony of so able a judge and so good a man, to witness that the utmost has been done by me to afford relief to the quarter, which so loudly and with so much reason calls for assistance. I am, with sincere esteem, &c.

TO GOVERNOR CLINTON.

MORRIS TOWN, 13 December, 1779.

SIR,

I have the honor to enclose Your Excellency sundry papers received from Major Ballard, respecting the effects of certain disaffected persons, taken and sold on the frontier. You will perceive he is in danger of being prosecuted for felony. There appears not, from the face of the papers, to have been any thing blamable in Major Ballard's conduct, as he only acted in obedience to his orders, on which must be

charged whatever irregularity there may have been in the affair. As the good of the service sometimes requires things to be done in the military line, which cannot be supported by the civil law, prosecutions of this kind may discourage officers from the discharge of their duty. It were therefore to be wished they could be prevented, except where there are appearances of oppression or fraud. Nothing of this offers itself in Major Ballard's representation; though it is difficult to judge without hearing the other parties. I take the liberty, however, of troubling your Excellency with the affair, that, unless you have reason to believe there has been a spirit of plunder in the transaction, you may have the goodness to interpose your influence for preventing the intended prosecutions. To make this the more practicable, I have directed the money, which arose on the sales, said to be deposited with Lt.-Colo. Whiting, to be paid to Your Excellency's order. But if, on inquiry, any of the officers seem to have been actuated by improper views, I wish them to suffer the penalty of the law, and shall be ready to promote every measure for doing justice to those who have been injured. With every sentiment of respect and regard, I have the honor to be, &c.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL WOODFORD.

MORRISTOWN, 13 December, 1779.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have the pleasure to find that the artillery is at length ready, and that the rear of the Virginia troops will march early to-morrow morning. By advices this

day received from Congress, it seems to be their intention, that the whole shall move by water from the Head of Elk to Williamsburg, and thence by land to South Carolina. I wish it were practicable to send them by water; but, by this arrangement, I take it for granted it is not. I am apprehensive, as the troops pass through their own State, the march will be attended with very considerable desertion; but I rely upon your vigilance and care, that you will take every precaution for preventing it, as far as will be possible. The most rigid discipline will be indispensable for this purpose. A chain of sentries round every encampment will be the best security.

I sincerely wish you and the troops under your command a comfortable march and a speedy arrival. The interests of America may very essentially require the latter, towards which I am persuaded you will do all in your power. Nothing will make me happier, than to hear at all times, that the Virginia line distinguishes itself, in every qualification that does honor to the military profession. Its composition is excellent; and a strict attention to discipline will always entitle it to vie with any corps in this, or in any other service. They are going into a new, and probably important field, to act with troops to whom they have been hitherto strangers. This ought to prove an additional incitement to a spirit of emulation. My affection for the troops, and my concern for the credit of the army under my command, as well as for their own credit, make me anxiously desire

the officers may exert themselves to cultivate that perfection in discipline, on which the usefulness and reputation of a corps absolutely depends. Similar motives, joined to a regard for the honor of the State to which they belong, will, I am confident, be felt with all the force they deserve; and will inspire them to a zealous and punctual discharge of their duty in *all its parts*. For here permit me to add, that, though bravery & good conduct, in time of action, are very essential, yet they are by no means the most material parts of an officer's duty. To train & prepare men for the field, (without which no exertion in the moment of action will avail much), To supply their necessary wants, as far as circumstances will enable; —To restrain licentiousness;—To support the honr. and dignity of the corps;—To be attentive to the cloathing, seeing that it is always in place, in order, and well put on, (without which, a soldier in rags & a soldier in uniform differ little in appearance);—To have the arms & accoutrements always in order;—In a word, to abide strictly by military rules, regulations, & orders; These constitute the essence of a soldier, and are characteristic of good officers.—Without these no service can be well conducted, & every service must be disagreeable, sluggish, & expensive; partaking more of the disorders of militia, than the regularity of well organized troops, which *ought* & *may* to move like clockwork, where the component parts discharge their respective duties with propriety and exactness. I entreat you to communicate what I have said to the gentlemen of the line; and, at the

same time, to assure them of my warmest esteem and best wishes for their welfare and success. With the truest regard, I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEADQUARTERS, MORRISTOWN,
15 December, 1779.

SIR,

The representations I had the honor to transmit in my letters of the 10th and 12th and those now inclosed will inform Congress of the deplorable distress of the great departments of the Army. I beg leave to add that from a particular consultation of the Commissaries, I find our prospects are infinitely worse than they have been at any period of the War, and that unless some expedient can be instantly adopted a dissolution of the Army for want of Subsistence is unavoidable—A part of it has been again several days without Bread—and for the rest we have not either on the spot or within reach a supply sufficient for four days—Nor does this deficiency proceed from accidental obstructions as has been the case on former occasions but from the absolute emptiness of our magazines everywhere and the total want of money or credit to replenish them. I look forward to the consequences with an anxiety not to be described.

The only temporary resource we seem to have left, till more effectual measures can be adopted, is this—To solicit a loan of four or five thousand barrels out of the quantity provided for the use of the French fleet and Army. I am informed upwards of twenty

thousand were collected in Maryland, all of which it is probable has not yet been exported. If this can be obtained to be replaced as spedily as possible, perhaps it may prove a timely relief; the mean while we shall do everything in our power to husband the little stock we have and draw all the aid the surrounding Country can afford—I know the measure recommended is a disagreeable one, but motives of delicacy must often yield to those of necessity; and in the present case it appears to me to admit not of hesitation. I have, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SULLIVAN.

MORRIS-TOWN, 15 December, 1779.

I had the pleasure of receiving a few days since, by Capt. Bruin, your letter of the 1st instant. I assure you, my Dear Sir, I am sensibly touched by so striking an instance of your friendship, at a time and in a manner, that demonstrates its sincerity, and confirms the opinion I have always entertained of your sentiments towards me. I wish you to believe, that your uneasiness, on the score you mention, had never the least foundation. A slender acquaintance with the world must convince every man, that actions, not words, are the true criterion of the attachment of his friends, and that the most liberal professions of good will are very far from being the surest marks of it. I should be happy that my own experience had afforded fewer examples of the little dependence to be placed upon them. I am particularly indebted to you for the

interesting information you give me of the views of a certain party. Against intrigues of this kind, incident to every man in a public station, his best support will be a faithful discharge of his duty, and he must rely on the justice of his country for the event.[1]

I flatter myself it is unnecessary for me to repeat to you, how high a place you hold in my esteem. The confidence you have experienced, and the manner in which you have been employed on several im-

[1] General Sullivan's resignation as major-general in the army was accepted by Congress on the 30th of November. In his letter to General Washington he had expressed very strong professions of friendship, adding that he thought he could do it with the more propriety as he was about to leave the service, and could not be suspected of speaking under the influence of interested motives. He then went on to say:

"Permit me to inform your Excellency, that the faction raised against you in 1777, into which General Conway was unfortunately and imprudently drawn, is not yet destroyed. The members are waiting to collect strength, and seize some favorable moment to appear in force. I speak not from conjecture, but from certain knowledge. Their plan is to take every method of proving the danger arising from a commander, who enjoys the full and unlimited confidence of his army, and alarm the people with the prospects of imaginary evils; nay, they will endeavor to convert your virtue into arrows, with which they will seek to wound you.

"The next stage is to persuade Congress, that the military power of America should be placed in three or four different hands, each having a separate quarter of the continent assigned to him, and each commander to answer to Congress only for his conduct. This, they say, will prevent an aspiring commander from enslaving his country, and put it in the power of Congress, with the assistance of the other commanders, to punish the attempt. This is a refinement in politics, and improvement on public virtue, which Greece and Rome could never boast. The present time is unfavorable to their designs. They well know, that the voice of citizens and soldiers would be almost unanimously against them; but they wait a more favorable opportunity, which they will certainly improve. I am well convinced that they cannot succeed; yet I thought it my duty, in the moment of my departure, to give you this notice, that you may not only be on your guard, but avoid entrusting those persons in matters where your interest and honor are nearly concerned. I persuade myself, that your steady and prudent conduct will baffle every attempt."—*December 1st.* See *Washington to Major-General Greene*, 26 March, 1780.

portant occasions, testify the value I set upon your military qualifications, and the regret I must feel, that circumstances have deprived the army of your services. The pleasure I shall always take in an interchange of good offices in whatever station you may hereafter be placed, will be the best confirmation of the personal regard with which I have been and am, very sincerely and truly, dear Sir, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

MORRIS TOWN, 17 December, 1779.

SIR,

The bearer of this, the Reverend Mr. De La Motte, represents to me, that he has been employed by order of Congress, as Missionary to the Indian tribes in the Eastern department, from which trust he is now returning. On conversing with him, he has expressed a willingness to go into Canada as a secret emissary. He appears to be not unintelligent; and, if there is good reason to depend on his fidelity, from the trial already made of him, he may be very useful in this way. His function, and his being a Frenchman, possessing the language and manners of the people, would give him signal advantages. He might gain intelligence of the enemy, sound the dispositions of the inhabitants, and instil into them those ideas which Congress would wish to prevail. But the same advantages would make him proportionably mischievous, if he should be in the interest of the enemy. He says a charge of this nature was *falsely* brought against him by Colonel Alan, the command-

ing officer at Machias. It should be a point well ascertained, before he is entrusted with a new employment. Should Congress find him worthy of confidence, and determine on sending him into Canada, I should be glad to be honored with a communication of the instructions they give him, and to be permitted to add such others relative to the military objects, as may be consistent with theirs. With the most perfect respect I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

[1] Read December 21st. Referred to the Board of War, Relating Monsr. de la Motte, Missionary to the Eastern Indians.

The desire of an expedition to Canada still prevailed with many persons. When General Gates went to Philadelphia, after the British had evacuated Rhode Island, he consulted M. de la Luzerne on the subject. Gates proposed, that five or six thousand American troops should pass into Canada, and that the commander should be authorized to make overtures to the Canadians, that they should enter into the American Union, and form a State as free and independent as any of the others; and that he should promise them a reimbursement of about two millions and a half of livres, as an equivalent for the depreciation of the Continental money, that would be dispersed among them during the expedition; and, to induce a confidence in those assurances, that the King of France should afford a guarantee for the payment. M. de la Luzerne objected to this plan, that it was not practicable, that the King would hardly listen to the guarantee, and that, if the United States had means of offensive operations, while the enemy had so large a possession of their territory, they had better apply them to the conquest of the Floridas.—*MS. Letter from Luzerne to Vergennes*, December 13th.

The Spanish agent, Miralles, had recently received instructions from the governor of Cuba, directing him, if possible, to induce Congress to unite with the Spaniards in the conquest of East Florida, and, by applying all their force against St. Augustine, to prevent the British from sending troops to Pensacola and Mobile. An ulterior project, also, was to attack the British posts on the borders of Louisiana. Congress expressed a disposition to facilitate these designs; but at the present juncture, when the enemy was in Georgia, and threatening Carolina, it was not possible. A plan of connecting a loan from Spain with the conquest of Florida was discussed, but was finally dropped without being brought to maturity. It was never the policy of France to aid the United States in making conquests, either at the north or the south; nor was it ever the policy of Spain to aid them in any thing, which should have a tendency to confirm their independence.—*Sparks*.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL WOODFORD.

MORRIS-TOWN, 18 December, 1779.

DR. SIR,

My nephew, George Augustine Washington, (son of Charles) seems to have a warm desire to enter the Service. Altho I think it rather late in the day (contest, I should say) to begin a military career, yet, in gratification of his wishes, I shd. be glad to indulge him, if there be any Ensigncies which want filling in the Virginia line. Should this be the case, and he is recommended to the State, I should be glad to receive their approbation as soon as may be, that a commission may be obtained from the Board of War; after which, I shall keep him for some time doing the duty of Ensign in my guard; at least till he can be rigged & made somewhat acquainted with his duty as an officer. I have not mentioned this matter to any but yourself; nor is it my wish that it should take place, if it interferes in the smallest degree with the rights or reasonable expectations of any others. If he is appointed at all, I could wish it were to one of the oldest & best Regiments. With great regard, I am, Sir, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HEATH, AT WEST POINT.

HD. QRS. MORRISTOWN, 21 December, 1779.

DR. SIR,

Notwithstanding the long preparations at New York, and the strong appearances of a large detachment's being made from thence, it seems certain, from very recent advices, that no Troops have sailed

as yet, and that the Enemy hold themselves in collected force. What their designs really are, I have not been able to learn, altho I have taken all the pains in my power to effect it.[1] The southern States and the West Indies present themselves, as the most probable objects of their attention, and this seems to be the general prevailing opinion; but, as their delay cannot be satisfactorily accounted for, we should guard in the best manner we can against every possible contingency. I would therefore suppose it possible, that the preparations of transports may be a feint, and that the Enemy may have it in contemplation to aim a sudden stroke, either against the Highland posts, or against this army. The latter event appears by far the more probable of the two.

My former Instructions, of the 27th of Novr. and the Conventional Signals, which have been established, and to which they referred, were only calculated to produce succor from the militia in case of a serious movement of the Enemy in the first instance; but it will be equally necessary, if they should direct their operations against this army. In this event it may be absolutely essential for you, and the troops under your command, to march and give me support; and in order to this, I wish the signals, by a previous and immediate arrangement between you and Gov-

[1] A large detachment of the enemy was in readiness to depart for the South, but was delayed till it could be ascertained what measures would be pursued by Count d'Estaing, in consequence of the disaster at Savannah. General Clinton wrote to Lord George Germaine: "Every disposition is made for the embarkation of the force destined to act in Carolina, and I wait in anxious suspense for further accounts of the French fleet. Until we have these, it is thought too hazardous to proceed."—*MS. Letter*, December 15th.

ernor Clinton, may be made to answer the purpose of calling out the militia to garrison the posts during the absence of the Continental troops. They should not be drawn out for less than Ten or Twelve days, and if practicable, on account of our supplies of flour, it will be advisable for each man to bring with him flour for that time; this to be paid for by the public. You will communicate with the Governor on these several points, and who, I am convinced, will do all in his power to promote them. On your hearing of the enemy's being in motion towards this army, in such a way as you can depend upon it, you will make the signals for calling in the militia, and hold the troops of the garrison in readiness to march at the shortest warning. I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO GOVERNOR LIVINGSTON.

MORRIS TOWN, 21 December, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

The situation of our army at this time, compared with that of the enemy, makes it necessary we should be very much upon our guard. They have more than double our force collected, and we are mouldering away dayly. They have been some time past making a show of embarkation; but whether it is sincere, or a mere feint to lull us into security, is not easy to tell; but, if they really design to make large detachments, they must be restrained by their uncertainty of the motions of the French squadron; and, if this or any other obstruction should continue,

Sir Henry Clinton may think himself bound to improve the interval in an offensive operation against this army. He cannot justify remaining inactive with a force so superior, and so many temptations to action. His enemies already clamor, and charge him with want of enterprise. He is not ignorant of the smallness of our numbers, and the distress of our magazines. He knows we have been obliged, for want of forage, to send the horses of the army to a distance from it. He cannot be insensible of the evils he would bring upon us by dislodging us from our winter-quarters. The loss of our huts at this inclement season would be a most serious calamity. This loss would in all probability be accompanied by that of a great part of our baggage, and a number of our men by desertions. It is difficult to determine the extent of the evils, if at so critical a juncture we should experience a failure of provisions, which we should have every reason to apprehend. Your Excellency's discernment makes it useless to enlarge.

But it is our duty to do all we can to avert the danger. Should the event I have mentioned take place, we shall want the aid of the whole strength of the State. The enclosed official letter is an application for the purpose, which I have thought proper to accompany with this confidential view of our circumstances for your private information. I entreat your Excellency to give my application your support, that the measure recommended may be immediately put in a proper train. To me it appears of indispensable importance. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE.

HEAD-QRS., 22 December, 1779.

SIR,

I have received your Letter of yesterday, and am extremely concerned to find that you meet with such difficulties in quartering the officers, whose rank and situation require they should be lodged in the houses in the vicinity of the army. I regret that the inhabitants should be unwilling to give shelter to men, who have made and are still making every sacrifice in the service of their country; and that the magistrates should refuse to give you effectual aid in a matter to which, in my opinion, by a liberal and necessary construction of the law, their authority is fully competent.

The dilemma is perplexing. On one hand, nothing I wish so much as to avoid the least deviation from the line prescribed by the law; on the other, it is impossible that the officers can remain without proper covering. If the obstacles cannot be removed, so as to satisfy the law, necessity decides that you must proceed in quartering the officers yourself in such houses, as the good of the service may require, having all possible regard to the circumstances of the Inhabitants, that none may be distressed or incommoded more than is unavoidable. To this I am persuaded your own disposition will induce you to pay the strictest attention. But before you have recourse to this step, you will make one more application to the magistrates, which you will be pleased to do in writing, and request their answer also in

writing. You will expose to them the reasonableness and necessity of their concurrence, and inform them what we shall be compelled to do, if they decline giving their assistance with cordiality and efficacy. Should they again refuse, you will then have no alternative but to do as I have mentioned.

I am, Sir, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD QUARTERS, MORRISTOWN,
2d January, 1780.

SIR,

Congress were pleased by their resolution of the 1st of January last, to express their desire of retaining Brigadier-General Duportail, Colonels La Radière and Laumoy, and Lt. Col. De Gouvion in the service of these States for another campaign, if agreeable to them. These gentlemen, having accepted the invitation, have now completed the term to which it extended; and it is with pleasure I can inform Congress, that their subsequent conduct has more than justified the opinion expressed in my letter on which that resolution was founded. They have been particularly useful in the course of this last period, and have acquired general esteem and confidence. I cannot forbear adding, that the better the gentleman at the head of the corps is known, the more he is found to be a man of abilities and of distinguished military merit.

As the continuance of these gentlemen in the

service, under present circumstances, appears to me indispensable, I have consulted General Duportail about their further intentions. His answer in behalf of the corps was, that they continue to have a sincere desire of being useful to the United States, and will esteem themselves highly honored by remaining in the service, if it be the wish of Congress, and measures are taken, through the channel of the French minister, to obtain the permission of their court; unless there should be a war by land kindled in Europe, in which case it would be their duty to return and devote their services to their own country.

It now remains with Congress to signify their intentions upon the subject; and, if they deem the continuance of these gentlemen necessary, to acquaint them with their wishes, and take the proper steps to obtain the concurrence of the French court, without which they cannot justify their stay. A period being limited in the last resolution makes this second application necessary, as the gentlemen could not with propriety out stay the time for which Congress had engaged them, without a new signification of their pleasure. I submit whether it may not be advisable to extend the requisition to the duration of the war.[1] It is to be lamented, that Colonel De La Radière is no longer among the number. Congress have no doubt heard of his death, which happened in —— and was regretted, as the loss of a very valuable officer. I have the honor to be, &c.

[1] Congress voted to retain these officers in the service during the war, if it should be consistent with their inclination and duty to their king.

TO COLONEL DANIEL BRODHEAD, AT FORT PITT.

HEAD-QUARTERS, MORRIS TOWN,
4 January, 1780.

SIR,

I have successively received your letters of the 10th, 22d of November and 13th of December. Persuaded that a winter expedition against Detroit would have great advantages over a summer one, and be much more certain of success, I regret that the situation of affairs does not permit us to undertake it. We cannot at present furnish either the men or supplies necessary for it. From the estimate you make of the enemy's force there, your garrison with all the aid you could derive from the Militia would not be equal to the attempt, especially as it must soon suffer so large a diminution by the departure of the men, whose terms of service are expiring; and (even were it not too late in the season) to march men such a distance in time, the same circumstance, and the detachment we are making to South Carolina, put it out of our power to supply the defect of your number from this quarter. We must therefore of necessity defer the prosecution of the enterprise to a more favorable opportunity; but I would wish you not to discontinue your inquiries and preparations as far as convenient, for it is an object of too much importance to be lost sight of.

I fear also, that you will not have force for the expedition you propose to the Natches, though this is much more within the compass of our abilities. It would scarcely be prudent to leave Fort Pitt without

a proportion of Continental troops for its defence. Sufficient dependance cannot be placed in the militia, and it is too valuable a post to be exposed to an accident. If you should leave only an hundred men there, besides those at the dependent posts, you would not have above one hundred and fifty for the expedition. Unless the number of the volunteers you expect exceed what I should imagine, there would be great danger to the party. We are too little acquainted with the situation of the Natches to count with assurance upon success; and, if we should fail, the party returning against stream so great a distance after a disappointment might run no small risk of being intercepted by the unfriendly Indians, through whom it would have to pass. I do not however mean to discourage the undertaking altogether, but to suggest the difficulties that occur to me, that every circumstance may be well weighed previous to entering upon it. As the business will be attended with little additional expense, I should be glad you would make every necessary preparation, and let me know when you will be completely ready, giving me an exact state of the force you will be able to employ on the expedition, and to leave at the garrisons under your command. Whatever you do should be under the veil of the greatest secrecy, as on this your success will depend. I shall be glad also, after closely examining your means, you will give me your sentiments on the practicability of the enterprise.

If I can meet with any Frenchman that answers

your description, willing to be so employed, I will send him to you; and you shall have an Engineer, if you go upon any thing that requires one. I shall write to the Board of War, recommending you may be supplied with a few pieces of Artillery and a proportion of stores, to be ready against there may be a call for them. I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD QRS., MORRIS TOWN,
4 January, 1780.

SIR,

The following Gentlemen, Colonels Magaw, Mathews, Ely, & Lt. Colo. Ramsay have been permitted to come out of New York on parole, with some new propositions for an exchange of prisoners, the result of a conference between Major-General Phillips and themselves. These they will have the honor of submitting to Congress, as I do not conceive myself authorized to take any steps in the business without their orders. I cannot fix the precise operation which the proposed plan would have but from such calculations as I have been able to make on the subject, from a comparative view of the propositions and the general state of the Convention Troops, Officers and men, and of the other Officers prisoners on both sides, we should have to give the Enemy for the Exchange of ours in this quarter, for whom we admit ourselves accountable—Three Cols.—Eight Lieut. Cols.—Five Majors—Thirty one Captains—Forty

Eight first Lieutenants—Twenty seven second Lieutenants and Ensigns and Twenty Staff which are all the officers prisoners of War that we have—and one Major General—one Brigadr.—One Lieut. Colo.—Two Majors—Seventeen Captains Thirty seven first Lieutenants — Eleven second Lieutenants and Ensigns—Twenty Regimental Staff, and about Seven or Eight Hundred Men, non Commissioned Officers and privates of the Convention Troops, which seems to be a full calculation.—Colo. Magaw and the Gentlemen with him hope, from the conferences they had with General Phillips and the ideas he expressed of forming the first division of the Convention Troops out of the broken Corps; that the number of privates would be less, as the Officers attached to those Corps exceed the number they would have on a general scale of proportion. If this should be the case, it will be so much the better. In the Estimate of Colonels, prisoners, Lt. Governor Hamilton and a Colo. Alligood are included. Doctor Connolly is also in the list of Lt. Cols., and I do not know the state of southern prisoners and therefore can form no accurate judgement what difference their being included may make; but I should conjecture it is against us—and would add Four or five Hundred privates to what the Enemy would have to receive. It is an unlucky circumstance that we are so much in the dark about their situation and the agreements that may have been entered into concerning them by the Commanders in that Quarter. If we were in possession of these facts the propriety of including or not

including them in the proposed exchange might be better determined.

The relief of the Militia Officers not taken in Arms ought if practicable to be a consequence of the exchange but I should think it best to avoid the relation established between them and Genl. Burgoyne in the 9th proposition, especially as several Officers are to be released on parole by the 3d proposition, without any immediate equivalent. As I understand from the Gentlemen that wait on Congress the exchange of the Militia Officers not taken in Arms will not be made a point by the Enemy, so as to prevent the release of our other Officers without them; but they will not admit them to parole, without some specific equivalent's being left in their hands or at least some engagements on the part of the public ensuring their return to captivity when ever they are called. The present proposals on the part of the Enemy are more reasonable, than any they have offered before, and I should hope that they may be improved into an agreement that will give the desired relief. I have taken the liberty to offer these remarks, and shall be ready to execute whatever Congress may be pleased to direct; and, as they will be fully possessed of the propositions, I shall be happy that any instructions they may think proper to honor me with may be as particular as possible in delineating the objects they have in view.

I would farther beg leave to suggest, that if Congress approve the propositions, I think it will be advisable for them to request the several States to give

up all the officers they have or claim as their prisoners, for the purpose of facilitating the exchange of ours, and as it would be the means of lessening the number of privates the Enemy would otherwise receive. If the States consent to it, the names & rank of the officers, and the places they are at, cannot be too soon communicated to me. Indeed, I regret, as I ever have, that there should be any State prisoners of war. The system has been productive at least of great inconveniences and discontents. I dont know how it first obtained; but I am certain, if it is practicable, that it cannot be too soon abolished. The indulgence which Colos. Magaw, Mathews, Ely, and Ramsay have received, is limited to a few days. This consideration, as well as the importance of the business, will, I am convinced, give them the early attention of Congress. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO THE MAGISTRATES OF NEW JERSEY.

HEAD-QUARTERS, MORRISTOWN,
8 January, 1780.

GENTLEMEN,

The present situation of the army, with respect to provisions, is the most distressing of any we have experienced since the beginning of the war. For a fortnight past the troops, both officers and men, have been almost perishing for want. They have

[1] Congress referred this subject back to General Washington, renewing at the same time the full powers with which he had been invested on a former occasion for exchanging prisoners. They also requested the executive authorities of the several States to send to him a list of the names and rank of all the officers, and the number of privates, belonging to the enemy and held as prisoners of war in the respective States, that they might be included in a general exchange, should a cartel be effected.—*Journals*, January 13th.

been alternately without bread or meat the whole time, with a very scanty allowance of either and frequently destitute of both. They have borne their sufferings with a patience that merits the approbation and ought to excite the sympathy of their countrymen. But they are now reduced to an extremity no longer to be supported. Their distress has in some instances prompted the men to commit depredations on the property of the inhabitants, which at any other period would be punished with exemplary severity, but which can now be only lamented, as the effect of an unfortunate necessity. This evil would increase and soon become intolerable, were not an instant remedy to be applied.

The distresses we feel are chiefly owing to the early commencement and uncommon rigor of the winter, which have greatly obstructed the transportation of our supplies. These causes have obliged us to exhaust all the magazines in the vicinity of the camp ; and, as they continue to operate, we shall be unable to derive seasonable succor from our more distant resources. From present appearances it must be more than five weeks before we can have the benefit of any material supplies beyond the limits of this State ; so that, unless an extraordinary exertion be made within the State to supply the wants of the army during that space, fatal consequences must unavoidably ensue. Your own discernment makes it needless to particularize. Influenced by these considerations, my duty to the public, and my affection to the virtuous inhabitants of this State, who, next to the army, would be the most immediate sufferers, have determined me to call upon the respective counties for a proportion of grain and cattle to satisfy the present exigency.

I have adopted this mode of requisition from a regard to the ease and accommodation of the inhabitants. As you are well acquainted with the circumstances of individuals, you will be able to apportion the quantity required to the ability of each ; and, as I have no doubt you will be convinced of the absolute necessity of the measure, I am persuaded your zeal for the common cause will induce you to exert your utmost influence to procure a cheerful and immediate compliance. In doing this, though you may not be authorized by the strict letter of the law, by consulting its spirit, which aims at the relief of the army, in an emer-

gency of so pressing and peculiar a nature, you will merit the acknowledgments of your fellow-citizens.

While I have entire confidence, that you will do every thing in your power to give efficacy to this requisition, I have too high an opinion of the patriotism of the people of this State, and of their attachment to an army making every sacrifice in defence of their country, to entertain the least apprehension of their not seconding your endeavors. But at the same time I think it my duty to inform you, that, should we be disappointed in our hopes, the extremity of the case will compel us to have recourse to a different mode, which will be disagreeable to me on every account, and on none more than the probability of its having an operation less equal and less convenient to the inhabitants, than the one now recommended. I entreat you to be assured, Gentlemen, that I have given you a just representation of our distresses, of the causes, and of the time which must, in all likelihood, elapse before we can obtain relief through the ordinary channels. From this you will be sensible, that delay or indecision is incompatible with our circumstances. With the greatest respect I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

[1] To one of the officers to whom Washington entrusted this letter to deliver to a county magistrate, he gave the following instructions:

"I have pitched upon you to superintend the execution of this measure in the County . . .; You will proceed thither with all despatch, and, calling upon the justices, will deliver to them the enclosed address, enforcing it with a more particular detail of the sufferings of the troops, the better to convince them of the necessity of their exertions. You will at the same time delicately let them know, that you are instructed, in case they do not take up the business immediately, to begin to impress the articles called for, throughout the County. You will press for an immediate answer, and govern yourself accordingly.

"If it be a compliance, you will concert with them a proper place for the reception of the articles, and the time of delivery, which for the whole is to be in ——— days after your application to them. The owners will bring their grain and cattle to this place, where the grain is to be measured and the cattle estimated by any two of the magistrates, in conjunction with the Commissary, (who will be sent to you for the purpose,) and certificates given by the Commissary, specifying the quantity of each article and the terms of payment. These are to be previously settled with the owners, who are to choose whether they will receive the present market price, which, if preferred, is to be inserted, or the market price at the time of payment. Immediately on receiving the

TO GOVERNOR TRUMBULL.

HEAD QUARTERS, MORRIS-TOWN,
8 January, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—

I have the honor to enclose your Excellency the copy of a letter I have just received from the late Commissary General by which you will see upon how ill a footing our future prospects of supplies are, particularly with respect to meat. This corresponds with representations from every quarter and with what we actually feel. The army has been near three months on a short allowance of bread; within a fortnight past almost perishing. They have been sometimes without bread, sometimes without meat;

answer of the magistrates, you will send me notice what it is. In case of refusal, you will begin to impress, till you make up the quantity required. This you will do with as much tenderness as possible to the Inhabitants, having regard to the stock of each individual, that no family may be deprived of its necessary subsistence. Milch cows are not to be included in the impress. To enable you to execute the business with more effect and less inconvenience, you will call upon . . . and any other well affected, active men in the county, and endeavor to engage their advice and assistance. You are also authorized to impress waggons for the transportation of the grain. A party of ——— will immediately march to assist you in the business of your mission. You will appoint a place with the Adjutant-General, where the officer commanding the party will hear of you.

"If the Magistrates undertake the business, which I should infinitely prefer on every account, you will endeavor to prevail upon them to assign mills for the reception and preparation of such grain, as the Commissary thinks will not be immediately useful in camp. I have reposed this trust in you, from a perfect confidence in your prudence, zeal, and respect for the rights of citizens. While your measures are adapted to the emergency, and you consult what you owe to the service, I am persuaded you will not forget, that, as we are compelled by necessity to take the property of citizens for the support of an army, on whom their safety depends, we should be careful to manifest that we have a reverence for their rights, and wish not to do any thing, which that necessity and even their own good do not absolutely require."—*To Colonel Matthias Ogden*, 8 January, 1780.

at no time with much of either, and often without both. They have borne their distress, (in which the officers have shared a common lot with the men,) with as much fortitude as human nature is capable of; but they have been at last brought to such a dreadful extremity that no authority or influence of the officers—no virtue or patience in the men themselves, could any longer restrain them from obeying the dictates of their sufferings. The soldiery have in several instances plundered the neighboring inhabitants even of their necessary subsistence. Without an immediate remedy this evil would soon become intolerable, and unhappily for us, we have no prospect of relief through the ordinary channels. We are reduced to this alternative, either to let the army disband or to call upon the several counties of this State to furnish a proportion of cattle and grain for the immediate supply of our wants. If the magistrates refuse their aid, we shall be obliged to have recourse to a military impress. But this, Sir, is an expedient as temporary in its relief as it is disagreeable in its execution and injurious in its tendency. An Army is not to be supported by measures of this kind. Something of a more permanent and effectual nature must be done. The legislative authority of the respective States must interpose its aid. The public treasury is exhausted; we have no magazines anywhere that I know of; the public officers have neither money nor credit to procure supplies. I assure your Excellency, as far as my knowledge extends, this is a faithful representation of our affairs.

Our situation is more than serious, it is alarming. I doubt not your Excellency will view it in the same light, and that the Legislature of the State of Connecticut will give a fresh proof of their wisdom and zeal for the common cause by their exertions upon the present occasion; and I hope I shall be thought to be justified by circumstances when I add, that unless each State enters into the business of supplying the army, as a matter seriously interesting to our political salvation, we may shortly be plunged into misfortunes from which it may be impossible to recover.

I have made a similar representation to all the States on which we depend for supplies. Maryland has passed an act which promises us much assistance in the article of flour and forage, though it must be some time before we can feel the benefit of it. She has appointed commissioners in each County with full power to purchase or impress all the grain in the State, more than is sufficient for the use of the inhabitants, and has interested them in a vigorous execution of the Commission.

I flatter myself the other States will make equal exertions; and then we shall escape the calamities with which we are now threatened.[1]

I have the honor to be, &c.

[1] "The situation of the army with respect to supplies is beyond description alarming. It has been five or six weeks past on half allowance, and we have not more than three days bread at a third allowance on hand, nor anywhere within reach. When this is exhausted we must depend on the precarious gleanings of the neighboring country. Our magazines are absolutely empty everywhere and our Commissaries entirely destitute of money or credit to re-

TO LORD STIRLING.

INSTRUCTIONS.

12 January, 1780.

My Lord:

The difficulty of making an attempt, upon the enemy on Staten Island, being in a great measure removed by the renewal of the frost and the enterprise, in case it should not succeed, not very likely to be attended with bad consequences, provided the state of the ice affords a ready and safe passage and return, (which is to be the Basis of the Expedition), I am inclined to direct the attempt and to intrust the command and execution of it to your Lordship.[1]

The Troops allotted for this Expedition are, the detachment of 750 men already on the lines under the command of Brig.-Genl. Irvine; the detachment of 1,000 men which marched this

plenish them. We have never experienced a like extremity at any period of the war. We have often felt temporary want from accidental delays in forwarding supplies, but we always had something in our magazines and the means of procuring more. Neither one nor the other is at present the case.

"This representation is the result of a minute examination of our resources. Unless some extraordinary and immediate exertions are made by the State from which we draw our supplies, there is every appearance that the army will infallibly disband in a fortnight. I think it my duty to lay this candid view of our situation before your Excellency, and to intreat the vigorous interposition of the State to rescue us from the danger of an event, which if it did not prove the total ruin of our affairs, would at least give them a shock from which they would not easily recover, and plunge us into a train of new and still more perplexing embarrassments than any we have hitherto felt." *Circular Letter to the Executives of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Maryland, and Delaware*, 16 December, 1779.

[1] "Our affairs are in so deplorable a condition (on the score of provisions) as to fill the mind with the most anxious & alarming fears. Such a situation, at all times to be lamented, is peculiarly unfortunate at this juncture, when there now is, or soon must be, a field opened for Enterprise.

"Circumstanced as things are, men half-starved, imperfectly cloathed, riotous, & robbing the country people of their subsistence from sheer necessity, I think it scarcely possible to embrace any momt. (however favourable in other respects,) for visiting the enemy on Staten Island; & yet, if this frost should have made a firm & solid bridge between them and us, I should be unwilling, indeed I cannot relinquish the idea of attempting it."—*Washington to Brigadier-General Irvine*, 9 January, 1780.

day under the command of Colo. Hazen, as a relief to Gen. Irvine; a detachment of between three and four hundred under the command of , which will leave Camp on Friday Morning in Sleds, and a fourth detachment of 500 men under the command of Colo. Walter Stewart, which will also leave Camp on Friday Morning, and join the Main Body or act separately, as your Lordship may, upon a further investigation of circumstances, judge most proper.

The objects in view are to captivate the Troops on the Island and bring off or destroy all public stores of every kind, and fat cattle and sheep, if time and circumstances will allow.

To point out any precise plan of operation would be wrong in me. Your movements must be governed by information and circumstances. You are therefore at full liberty to pursue such measures as shall appear most conducive to attain the objects of your command. I shall, however, give you my present ideas of the several matters which appear to me worthy of your Lordship's attention.

From the best information I have been able to obtain the Enemy's force on Staten Island does not exceed 1,000 men. The principal part of whom it is said are in hutts near their Redoubts at the Watering place; the Queen's Rangers, about 200, at Richmond, and Buskirk's Regiment, of near one hundred at Decker's.

To get on the Island without discovery is so essentially necessary, that the complete success of the enterprise depends absolutely upon it. Every device and stratagem therefore should be used to effect it, by eluding or seizing their Guards or Patrols, and deceiving their spies on this side.

The greatest part of Irvine's detachment being at and in the neighborhood of Elizabeth Town, and Hazen's marching to Connecticut Farms in the Vicinity thereof, will draw the enemy's attention in a particular manner to that quarter. By crossing Stewart's detachment, therefore, at the old Blazing Star or, which would be still more unsuspected, at or near Dusaway's, (by a mill which is on the Island) about the hour of ten at night, and pushing it to Richmond, with the caution I have already suggested, I think there is a moral certainity of surprising the troops at that place.

As the attempt upon Richmond, whether successful or not, will give an alarm, and that alarm will communicate very quickly thro' the Island, the co-operation of the main Body must be well timed, or the enemy on the other quarter will probably, by previously putting themselves in a posture of defence, defeat the effect of the operation against them.

It is not likely that any number of prisoners will be taken, unless the Redoubts on the Watering place are possessed very early by us. And as I take it for granted that they can only be possessed by surprise, I would propose the following mode of effecting it.—The main Body to cross at Trembly's point on account of the goodness of the Ice, and because it seems an unsuspected place, and march immediately to the Cross Roads at Parker's before they separate. From hence, two parties of 100 men each, covered by 800 or 1000 men are to move as rapidly as possible for the Redoubts at the Watering place, by the Cross Roads at Merserau's, continuing along the Middle Road, provided, the Enemy have not taken the alarm ; in that case I conceive the attempt would be fruitless. The parties of 100 men, if not interrupted, are to advance each to a Redoubt and endeavor to surprise it, before it can be reinforced. If they succeed, they can with ease hold the Works untill the support comes up—If they fail—they are again to unite with the covering party, and proceed to Decker's on the lower Road—first burning the Hutts of the enemy if practicable.

The remainder of the troops, (if a separation should not be deemed uneligible) may, one half take post at the Cross Roads at Parker's and the other at the Cross Roads, a mile beyond, at J. Merserau's and Dawson's, with orders to halt there untill the parties designed for the surprise of the Forts have full time to reach them (to do which will I conceive require three hours.) During this time they may probably intercept retreating parties from Richmond : but they are not to remain longer for this, or any other purpose, than the three hours, at the expiration of which they are to form a junction at the last mentioned Cross Roads (Merserau's and Dawson's) and push immediately for Decker's, beating up the Enemy's quarters and driving them towards the forts at the Watering place, whither it is supposed

they will retreat. But if the Garrison at Decker's should not evacuate it, nor appear disposed to surrender upon a peremptory challenge and threat to burn them out, or if parties should throw themselves into houses, it should not retard the pursuit of the fugitives, parties may be left to watch them, or should we succeed in the principal attacks, they will afterwards fall of course.

To secure the Garrison of Decker's effectually, should they incline to make resistance, a number superior to those within may be left there, till Artillery can be brought up to reduce them. But as the occasion for Artillery is at the present a matter of very great uncertainty, and as it would, in the present state of the Roads, exceedingly retard and encumber your march, I should not think it advisable to pass any even in the first instance. It may be so disposed near Elizabeth Town as to come to you at a moment's notice by De Harts point.

If the party under Colo. Stewart succeeds in the attempt upon Richmond, the prisoners under the escort of the worst and most fatigued men may be immediately sent to Brunswic, and be directed to endeavor to form a junction with the main Body by the Road leading from Richmond to the Watering place, by Decker's.

It is a difficult matter to combine operations so perfectly in point of time as that one part will not impede, if not totally defeat the other, and this, it is to be feared, will be the case in the present instance, if there is an attempt to surprise the troops at Richmond and at the Watering place at the same time. The latter is important, but precarious; the other is of less consequence, but more certain. From observation and information, after you get down, you must determine which to prefer, if an attempt on both at the same time should be deemed ineligible. You will give Colo. Stewart orders accordingly, with whom you must keep up the best correspondence you can before crossing, furnishing him with your watch-words, &c.

If it should be found that the Enemy on the Island cannot derive succor from New York, that there is no appearance of the Frost breaking up, and that by remaining upon the Island we can starve them into a compliance by confining them to their Works, the experiment ought by all means to be made, and measures shall be taken here to give every possible aid.

Plank will be prepared for Platforms to go on and off the Ice,

and the officers must take care to keep the troops in open order while passing. An officer in whose diligence you can confide, should reconnoitre the crossing place before night and make observations on the opposite shore. He should cross over with a party of 15 or 20 chosen men at least half an hour before the Column comes down, having sent forward two or three trusty men to see that the coast is clear, he should follow with his party and so dispose of them as to seize any patrols or suspicious persons.

Some of Webb's men cloathed in Red would be best for this duty and to be always in advance.

Every disposition should be made before crossing, the officers for the different services well instructed, and Guides assigned them, that there may not be the least delay after the line of march is taken up.

Every officer should have a Roll of the platoon he commands and see that no man absents himself; the most profound silence should be observed under pain of instant death.

White Cockades or some Badge of distinction should be worn by our officers and men, and the Watch word should be such as may deceive the Enemy—for instance Clinton, Cornwallis, Skinner, &c., &c.

There should be no firing if it is possible to avoid it in the several attacks. The Bayonet will be found the most effectual weapon especially in the night.

In case of success, the Value of every thing that is public property or lawful plunder shall be divided in first proportion among the officers and men. And if any officer or soldier attempts to appropriate any thing to his own particular use, he shall be compelled to deliver it up, shall forfeit all pretensions to a common share, and shall be punished at the discretion of a Court Martial for disobedience of Orders. No private property to be brought off on any pretence whatever, except fat Cattle, &c., as before mentioned.

Heartily wishing success to the enterprise, and every possible honor and glory to your Lordship and the troops concerned, I am with much truth and sincerity, &c.[1]

[1] "I have reason to believe, that many of the inhabitants, suspecting that something is in agitation, are preparing to go up, upon the Island with intent to plunder. Every thing of this kind should be prohibited as far as possible.

TO THE BOARD OF WAR.

HEAD QUARTERS, 15 January, 1780.

* * * With regard to the point about aides de camp, on which the Board are pleased to request my sentiments it is clearly my opinion, that those appointed before the 27th May, 1778, and now in service as aides, and who are not admissible into any State line, are eligible to commands and to sit on courts martial, according to the ranks given by the Resolution of the 5 June, 1776, as they may respectively apply, and may be nominated occasionally to either, by special order, when the commander in chief, or officer commanding in any department where they are shall think proper. This I hold to be the case with respect to every officer serving with the

If any of the militia will embody themselves regularly, put themselves under your Lordship's command, and share the fatigues of the regular soldrs., I think they should be encouraged in such case, and admitted to an equal share with the Continental troops, of whatever shall be brought off by authority. I have furnished the party that marches this morning, with Woollen Caps and mittens, and shall send down a parcel for those below.

"I think it will be advisable, when you get upon the Island, to let the Inhabitants know that such as are found in Arms must expect to be treated as Enemies, and their Effects given up as plunder. I would be understood to hold out this by way of threat, rather than put it in execution as to taking their effects. Such as are found in arms they must be brought off as prisoners of war. A central position to the three posts on the Island will, without doubt, be thought most eligible by your Lordship, that the Garrisons may afford no relief to each other, nor have any communication."—*Washington to Lord Stirling*, 14 January, 1780.

On making the attempt early in the morning of the 15th, the enemy were found prepared to receive them; and a free passage was open by water from the Island to New York, instead of the channel being closed by the ice. A boat had already been despatched by the enemy to carry intelligence and procure reinforcements which arrived during the day, and the next morning Lord Stirling returned to Elizabethtown.

army to whom Rank has been given. In a military point of view, rank necessarily implies a capacity to be elected to command, or to sit on courts martial, and the only essential difference between aides and officers under the description I have mentioned, and others, is the last are attached permanently to particular corps by their commissions—the first, to the line of the army at large, but not to any particular corps, and when employed it is on detachments, and of course only temporarily. The case of these is nearly similar to that of general officers who have no particular corps designated in their commissions for their command, but who depend on a special order for the purpose. Without this, such aides, &c., cannot command, but when this is given, all officers in the detachment to which they are appointed, of inferior rank, or of the same, but of posterior appointments, are subject to them. And whether the rank is conferred by a commission of the common form, or by brevet, or by an act of the States in Congress, it is equally valid, and its operation must be precisely the same in these instances. Were a contrary principle to be established, the rank given these officers would be a mere sound, void of reality or any meaning. Besides such a conclusion being intirely unmilitary, it would be the extreme of injustice, at least, to many gentlemen under these descriptions, whose services have been long, faithful, and I cannot but add of great advantage to their country. As to the issuing of commissions for them, and the sort they should be, it will be with the Board, or perhaps with Con-

gress to decide; but it appears to me that it would only be right for them to receive commissions of the usual form, confirming their Rank from the times of their appointment, where they were properly made, and securing to them every emolument of service. With respect to Brigade Majors, I cannot find any resolution giving them rank.

It is to be regretted that there has been such a want of system in this business, and that some gentlemen have received one sort of commissions and some another, while others, whose pretensions are equal on every consideration, have received none at all.

TO JOHN PARKE CUSTIS.

MORRISTOWN, 20 January, 1780.

DEAR CUSTIS:

I should have acknowledged the receipt of your letter of the twelfth ult. long since, but for the many important matters which have claimed my attention.

My letter which missed you on its passage to Williamsburg, will acquaint you (as there is little doubt of its having got to hand long ere this) of the footing I proposed to put the valuation of the cattle upon that you had of me. I only wished to hear upon what principle Colonel Bassett acted, as I thought it ungenteel to give a gentleman the trouble of performing a service, and disregard it so much afterwards as not even to inquire upon what grounds he went. As I want nothing but justice, and this being your aim, it is scarce possible for us to dis-

agree; but there is one thing which ought to be held in remembrance, and I mention it accordingly, and that is, that I should get no more real value for my cattle at £40 apiece, payable in the fall of 1779, than I should have got @ £10 the preceding fall, provided the money had been then paid. For example, you could have got two barrels of corn in 1778 for £10, and I can get no more now for £40. With respect to other things it is the same. It would be very hard, therefore, by keeping me out of the use of the money a year, to reduce the debt three-fourths of the original value—which is evidently the case, because the difference between specie and paper, in the fall of 1778, was about four to one only—now the difference is upwards of thirty; consequently, ten pounds paid at that period was equal to 50 shillings good money; but paid at this day, is not worth, nor will it fetch more than a dollar. Had the money been paid, and put into the loan office at the time you say the cattle ought to have been valued, I should have received a proportionate interest—that is, as the money depreciated the nominal sum for the interest would, by a resolve of Congress, have increased, and I should have got the real value in the interest: whereas, if you pay me £10 in loan office certificates of this date for my cattle, I shall receive for every £10 or 50s., which is the relative worth of it, according to the then difference of exchange, one dollar and no more.

These are self evident truths; and nothing, in my opinion, is more just and reasonable, if you can come at, and do fix the value of the cattle at what they

were worth in the fall of 1778, and would then have been appraised at, that you should pay loan office certificates of that date; for had you paid me the money at that time, I should have lent it to the public, if there had been no other use for it, as, it is not a custom with me to keep money to look at.

This reasoning may, in part, be considered as an answer to so much of your letter of the twelfth of December, as relates to the payment of the annuity for the dower estate. You do not seem disposed to make the just and proper distinction between real and nominal sums. A dollar is but a dollar, whether it passed in silver at 6s., or paper at £6, or sixty pounds. The nominal value, or the name, is but an empty sound, and you might as well attempt to pay me in oak leaves, with which I can purchase nothing, as to give me paper money that has not a relative value to the rent agreed on.

If you have been unfortunate in your crops, or in the means of raising money from your estate, I am sorry for it, and do not by any means wish to put you to an inconveniency in paying the rent at this time which became due the first of this month. It may lie till my wants, or your convenience is greater, but as it was certainly the expectation of us both that this annuity was to be raised and paid out of the produce of your crops, a moment's reflection and calculation must convince you that it is full as easy to do it at this day, (if you have those crops,) as at any period before or since the war began, because the difference between the old and present prices of

every article raised upon a plantation or farm, bears at least an equal proportion to the difference between specie and paper. It is a matter of little consequence then, whether you pay £30 in paper, or 20s. in specie, when the same quantity of corn, wheat, tobacco, or any other article you possess will fetch the former with more ease now, than it would the latter in the best of times.

The fact is, that the real difference, between the prices of all kinds of country produce now and before the war, is greater than between specie and paper. The latter in Philadelphia, being about thirty, when it is well known that the former, in many things, is at least a hundred, and in scarce any article less than forty. Witness flour, wheat, Indian corn, &c., which are the great articles of produce of every Virginia estate. It is the unusualness of the idea, and high sound which alarms you in this business; for supposing the difference to be thirty prices, and in consequence you pay £15,750, I neither get nor do you pay a farthing more than £525, because as I have already observed, less corn, wheat, &c., will enable you to pay the former now, than it would take to pay the latter while they were at their old and accustomed prices—calling the sum, therefore, which you pay to me £15,750 or £525, is a matter of moonshine, as it is the thing not the name, that is to be regarded.

I have wrote to Mr. Lund Washington concerning Sheredine's point, and am in some doubt whether the strip of land will compensate the expense of the bank which must be lengthy. I have left it to him, how-

ever, to determine this matter, and to apply for the ditchers, (who were about to leave you) if he should want them. If your banks are not properly executed, it is to be feared you will find more plague from the musk rats and other vermin than you seem to apprehend, when the warm weather returns.

I am glad to hear that your assembly are disposed to exert themselves in the great work of appreciation, I heartily wish them success in the attempt. We have nothing new in this quarter. The weather has been, and now is intensely cold, and we are beginning to emerge from the greatest distress on account of the want of provisions.[1]

My love to Nelly and the children, and I am sincerely and affectionately yours.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE.

Morris-town, 22 January, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

Appear's, and facts must speak for themselves. To these I appeal. I have been at my prest. quarters since the 1st day of Decr., and have not a Kitchen to

[1] "Indeed all the counties of this State, from which I have heard, have attended to my requisitions for provision with the most cheerful and commendable zeal. What we shall obtain in this manner, in conjunction with the steps taken by Congress, and the States from which we are principally furnished with provisions, will, I flatter myself, secure us from a recurrence of the evil. With regard to your suggestion for making the certificates given on this occasion a tender for the taxes for Continental purposes, I do not consider myself at liberty to propose any particular mode to Congress. I shall, however, as the good people of the State have been so zealous and liberal in relieving our wants, take the freedom to mention the policy of discharging them as early as possible."— *Washington to John Witherspoon*, 20 January, 1780.

cook a Dinner in, altho' the Logs have been put together some considerable time by my own Guard. Nor is there a place at this moment in which a servant can lodge, with the smallest degree of comfort. Eighteen belonging to my family, and all Mrs. Ford's, are crowded together in her Kitchen, and scarce one of them able to speak for the colds they have caught.

I have repeatedly taken notice of this inconveniency to Majr. Gibbs, and have as often been told, that boards were not to be had. I acqueesced, and believe you will do me the justice to acknowledge, yt. it never has been my practice to involve the public in any expense I could possibly avoid, or derive benefits which would be inconvenient or prejudicial to others. To share a common lot, and participate the inconveniences, wch. the army, from the peculiarity of our circumstances, are oblig'd to undergo, has with me been a fundamental principle; and, while I conceived this to be the case universally, I was perfectly content. That it is not so, I app'l to your own observation; though I never intended to make the remark, nor should I have done it, but for the question wh. involuntarily drew from me the answer, wch. has become the subject of your Letter.

Equally opposed is it to my wishes and expectation, that you should be troubled in matters respecting my accommodation, further than to give the necessary orders, and furnish materials, without which orders are nugatory. From what you have said, I am fully satisfied that the persons to whom you entrusted the execution of the business are

alone to blame; for certain I am, they might by attention have obtained, (equally with others,) as many boards as would have answered my purposes long ere this. Far, very far is it from me, to censure any measure you have adopted for your own accommodation, or for the more immediate convenience of Mrs. Greene. At all times I think you are entitled to as good as circumstances will afford, and, in the present condition of your Lady, conceive that no delay could be admitted. I shd. therefore with great willingness have made my conveniences yield to hers, if the point had lain there, being very sincerely, your obedient and affectionate servant, &c.[1]

TO MESSRS. GERRY, LIVINGSTON, AND MATHEWS.

HEAD QUARTERS, 23 January, 1780.

GENTLEMEN,

I have had the honor to receive your letter of the 11th, with a copy of the Propositions to which it refers, and on which you are pleased to request my opinion.

With respect to the first proposition, I beg leave to inform you that the object of it has been anticipated in part. On the 6th of this month from the infinite distress in which we were for the want of provision, and the improbability, on account of the

[1] It devolved on General Greene, as quartermaster-general, to provide quarters for the Commander-in-chief and other officers. Owing to a deficiency of materials and the lateness of the season when the army was cantoned for the winter, he had many obstacles to encounter in making the necessary arrangements.

severity of the weather, of an attempt on the part of the enemy, I wrote to the Brigadiers and directed them with the concurrence of the Colonels and Commanding Officers of Regiments, to discharge all the soldiers in this camp, whose inlistments and terms of service would clearly expire by the 31st., which was accordingly done. As to the remaining Troops which come within the proposition, I should hope from the circumstances of the season and the detachment the enemy have made, that they might be discharged without materially affecting our military security. It would however, diminish our present force here, according to the best estimate I can form, from eight to eight hundred and fifty men, and that at West Point and Danbury where the Massachusetts and New Hampshire troops are stationed, supposing none to have been already discharged there in this month, and counting upon the columns in the muster rolls, about two thousand. In this number not any of the new Levies of Massachusetts which amount to about twelve hundred are included. The service of the majority of these will expire in April, the rest probably before. None of those from the enormous bounty they have received and the consequences to which the precedent might lead should in my opinion be discharged at any rate. But altho' the discharge of the inlisted Troops might not endanger our military security, and the measure would be attended with a public saving ; yet there are some objections to it, as their discharge before their inlistments expire of course would serve to increase the uneasiness of

those, who are engaged for a longer time, or permanently, and who are but too much dissatisfied when they take place in regular order. And besides, it would entirely take away all chance of reinlisting them for the war, which however is not considerable. Our late sufferings for provision and the deficiencies in many essential articles of clothing, are very discouraging circumstances, and have not only operated to prevent this, but have occasioned great desertions. How far the considerations I have mentioned, are to be put in competition with the expence that would be saved by their dismission, Congress can best determine; but I would by all means dissuade for the reasons above, and as it would be particularly disgusting to the Troops, from the discharge of the new levies.

Considering the present reduced condition of the regiments, and that they will become still weaker, and the little probability there is that the States will put them upon so respectable a footing as to enable offensive operations to be carried on, at least to any great extent, tho' our true interest and policy may require it, added to the embarrassments we experience on the score of provision, cloathing, and other supplies, I shall not offer anything against the proposed reform, and more especially as I am not acquainted with the views Congress may have, or with the political state of affairs in Europe. It will, however, in the execution be found a work I fear of difficulty and delicacy; and as this will always be the case, whenever a reform of this sort is made, it were to be wished, both for the sake of harmony and the

good of the service, that it may be the last and calculated on such a plan and number of corps as will be certainly kept up. In conducting the business it will be happy if the mode the least exceptionable can be hit upon. What this mode should be is difficult to determine, but I should suppose it would be best to make it the effect of some general principle—such as casting of lots, or retaining the oldest and strongest regiments, or the oldest officers, or the like, which will probably have a less disagreeable operation than a mode which would be attended with particular discrimination or preferences founded on supposed merits. The officers of the reduced regiments to be incorporated as well as the men in their respective lines, as far as it can be done till the corps retained are compleat; and the rest to retire on the allowance proposed. I would not however recommend the 5th proposition in its present extent for two reasons: one is, the reintroducing the supernumerary officers into the corps kept up as vacancies happened, would in most cases be the cause of discontent and the means of perpetuating it; the other is, they would be obliged to hold themselves in constant readiness to join the army when called upon, and consequently could not pursue any other occupation to advantage. Besides, as promotion is looked for, as it should be, as the reward of service, the not conferring it upon the officers whose fortune it had been to be retained, when occasion offered, might lessen their ardor, and take away a primary inducement to a good and proper conduct.

I have mentioned an incorporation of the officers as well as of the men, because we are exceedingly deficient with respect to them, and the same is suffering greatly for the want; and as it will be the means of providing the regiments with a proper number, which could not be done by new appointments, admitting for a moment that they would be equally good, as there are few, if any to be found at this time, willing to engage in a service which promises at best but little emolument if not a certainty of loss. And while I am on this subject, I would beg leave to add, that it appears to me essential to promote the public good, that the establishment adopted on the 27th of May, 1778, so far as it respects the giving of companies to field officers, should be altered, and a captain be appointed to each. Owing to the deduction of captains by this institution, the appointing them aids de camp, &c., and the other drafts upon the officers for the regimental staff, their resignation and accidental sickness, we find the number left with the corps absolutely insufficient even for their good order and government while in camp.

The scheme of reduction I suppose will be extended to the corps and regiments not belonging to any particular State. The case of the officers belonging to these is rather more embarrassing than that of the officers in the State lines, from the certainty of its being impracticable to incorporate them with the latter, a circumstance to be regretted, as there are several in those corps of great merit and in general inferior to none in the service. If they

could be incorporated with the rest, it were much to be wished; but as this cannot, I think, be done, I see nothing left for it but to incorporate those corps with each other, so as to compleat such of them as are retained; and I should hope as they will be there extremely valuable, that effectual measures will be taken for keeping them respectable and rendering their situation, both officers and men, as comfortable in point of supplies as those belonging to the particular States. At present their condition, or at least that of most of them, is painfully distressing, and such as renders some reform or mode of relief, absolutely necessary. Indeed it is to be wished that the several States had it all equally in their power to assist the officers and men belonging to their respective lines with necessaries, for even among these the discriminations in this instance are great, and the source of uneasiness; but in the case of many of the corps that do not come within that description, there is not the smallest relief extended to them.

I will only beg leave to observe in addition to what I have said, that whatever plan it shall be the pleasure of Congress to adopt, whether to reduce the regiments or not, it appears to me they cannot decide too soon upon it; and that their requisitions for men to the States, if not already made, for filling the regiments they determine to keep up, should not be longer deferred. Events possibly may take place to make this unnecessary, but I think we ought not to relax in our preparations, as the enemy would ascribe it to our inability and might be encouraged perhaps

to persevere in the war, which otherwise they might judge it their interest to bring to a conclusion. And besides our relaxing in our preparations might impress our ally and the Court of Spain with concern, and produce sentiments and indeed a conduct that might be very unfavorable to us. The earliest measures will not be sufficient to effect a proper arrangement in time; and if they are not taken immediately we shall open the campaign and continue it in the most confused and disordered state—such as policy and a regard to the reputation of our arms should prevent as far as it can be done. This will readily be perceived by recurring to the state of the army which I had the honor of submitting to Congress in my letter of the 18th of November, and in a more particular manner by that of the Virginia Troops, transmitted in a subsequent correspondence, which will but too well answer for a representation of the state of the rest.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL ST. CLAIR.

INSTRUCTIONS.

You will be pleased to repair to our lines and investigate the causes of the late misfortune and disgrace at Elizabeth Town, &c., and report your opinion thereupon, as soon as inquiry is made.[1] You will also examine into the state of our Guards, and see if

[1] A detachment of British troops, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Bushkirk, crossed over from Staten Island at Trembley's Point, and entered Elizabethtown between eleven and twelve o'clock in the night of the 25th of January. It consisted of one hundred dragoons, and between three and four hundred infantry. They took several prisoners, burnt the meeting-house, town-house, and another building, plundered some of the inhabitants, and retired without loss. A similar attack was made at the same time on a small

any change can be made in their position for the better; havg. respect, as far as present circumstances will allow, to the objects in view, which are security to this camp, cover to the country near the enemy's lines, and for prevention of that injurious and abominable traffic, which is carried on with the city of New York.

While you are in the discharge of this duty, it is my wish, that you would obtain, in as unsuspected a manner as possible, a perfect knowledge of the enemy's strength, situation, and guards &c., on Staten Island and at Paulus hook, the state of the ice on the No. River, and such other information as it may be beneficial and important for us to be acquainted with. It is my wish, also, that you may obtain a compleate knowledge of the places and manner in which the Enemy's shipping, flat-boats, and other craft are laid up and secured, thereby discovering whether some successful attempt, by stratagem or otherwise, may not be made to destroy them. The relief, which went down to the Detachment under the Command of Colo. Hazen, when joined thereto, will form a body of 2,000 Rank and file; and as there were reasons for apprehending that the enemy had some offensive plan in view, (which actually took place that very night,) I ordered Colonel Hazen to remain there with his command a few days, or till further orders. You will please to take command of both detachments, and retain the old till the objects here enumerated are fulfilled, unless you should think best to order the return of it to camp before. If in the course of your tour of duty below, and investigation of the enemy's posts, any operation upon a large or small scale presents itself, you will delay no time in communicating your ideas fully on the subject to me, provided in the latter instce. a favourable opportunity is not lost by delay, in wch. case you are left altogether to your own discretion; bearg. in mind always, that new disappointments will add discredit to our arms. But, while the state of the Ice admits a free and easy passage of Troops from New-York, any attempt otherwise than by surprise may be dangerous. Given at Head-Qrs., Morristown, the 27th day of Jan., 1780.

party at Newark, and with equal success. The academy was burnt. In both places the surprise was complete. The whole number of prisoners taken from the Americans was four officers, and about sixty privates.—*Colonel Hazen's MS. Letter*, January 6th.

TO ELBRIDGE GERRY, IN CONGRESS.

Hd. Q'rs, Morris Town, Jany. 29, 1780.

Dr. Sir,

I received Your obliging Letter of the 12th. I am sorry to find, that Congress had not at that time made any requisitions of men from the States, as it appears to me that the army, without reinforcements, by the expiration of the enlistments of so many Men, and of the service of the new levies, as they are called, will be much more reduced than will be compatible with our interests and policy. It was in part from the possibility, that such an idea, as the one you suggest to have obtained with some, might take place, that I was induced to mention, in my Letter of the 18th of November, the essential difference between an army on paper, and its real efficient force, and to illustrate the point, by contrasting the column of the *present fit for duty* in the Return transmitted, with that of the *Total.* The hopes indulged, from the beginning of the Contest to the present day, from time to time, that a peace would soon take place, have been the source at least of great expense, and they may still prove so and the means of protracting the war. There is nothing so likely to produce peace, as to be well prepared to meet an Enemy; and from this persuasion, and the effect you justly observe the contrary on our part might have on the mind of the Court of France, and also on that of Spain, I think it would be right for us to hold forth at least every appearance of preparation and vigor, and really to do what our abilities and the circumstance of our finance may well justify. The latter I own is a most im-

portant consideration ; but I cannot judge how far the state of it may or may not require retrenchments and a spirit of economy, or indeed inactivity in our affairs. You will however perceive, by a Letter to Congress, of the 18th by Baron Steuben, that I have again mentioned my opinion of the propriety of placing the army on a more respectable footing, than it will be at the opening of the Campaign, without their interposition ; and that I have offered the same in my Letter to you, Mr. Livingston, and Mr. Mathews.

With respect to provision, the situation of the army is comfortable at present on this head, and I ardently pray, that it may never be again as it has been of late. We were reduced to a most painful and delicate extremity ; such as rendered the keeping of the troops together a point of great doubt. The exertions of the magistrates and inhabitants of this State were great and cheerful for our relief. I have had my attention much engaged by a variety of pressing business, and must rely on your indulgence to excuse an earlier acknowledgment of your favor.[1]

I am, dear Sir, with great regard and esteem, &c.

[1] "I have now the pleasure to inform Congress that the situation of the army for the present is, and it has been for some days past, comfortable and easy on the score of provision. We were reduced at last to such extremity, and without any prospect of being relieved in the ordinary way, that I was obliged to call upon the magistrates of every county in the state for specific quantities to be supplied in a limited number of days. I should be wanting in justice to their zeal and attachment, and to that of the inhabitants of the state in general, were I not to inform Congress, that they gave the earliest and most chearful attention to my requisitions, and exerted themselves for the army's relief in a manner that did them the highest honor. They more than complied with the requisitions in many instances, and owing to their exertions, the army in great measure has been kept together."—*Washington to the President of Congress*, 27 January, 1780.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SCHUYLER.

HEAD QUARTERS, MORRISTOWN,
30 January, 1780.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your fair daughter, for whose visit Mrs. Washington and myself are greatly obliged, did me the honor to present your favor of the —— Inst.—for which, and the several useful hints (if it should be in my power to extend my views to St. Johns) contained in it, you have my hearty thanks.

To the several matters for investigation, mentioned in my letter of the 25th Ulto. permit me to add a further enquiry into the place and manner of securing the enemy's vessels on lake Champlain. This is become essential from accidental information rec'd the other day which, though not delivered as authentic, has at least the semblance of truth. It is that the enemy during the frost scuttle and sink their vessels under the Guns of St. Johns. Should this be the fact there is not an object to compensate the fatigue, hardships, and risks to which troops must be exposed in such an enterprize (if other matter should answer) nor could I stand justified for exposing them to these, or the public to the expence, which would arise from the expedition.

I am perfectly in sentiment with you respecting the policy of making friends of those Indians we have lately chastised and all others, and of the expediency of doing it at this time. The hour of victory, we are informed by Lord North, is the time for negotiation. That hour, so far as they are concerned, is come; and it would be wrong in my judgment, to

force them, irrecoverably, into the arms of the enemy. To compel a people to remain in a state of desperation, and keep them at enmity with us, when no good is to be expected from it and much evil may follow, is playing with the whole game against Us. If any security therefore can be had of their Aid, (if circumstances should require it)—or neutrality under all circumstances, We should, by being rid of a dangerous and distressing Foe (which they certainly are,) be relieved of a heavy expence, and acquire more freedom to our Arms in other quarters—and, which is a consideration of no small weight, must embarrass the enemy not a little in the field, the cabinet, and at negotiation, if matters come to this.

How far, my good Sir, would it be practicable if the Indians should be disposed to more than a neutrality, either by themselves, or with the aid of a few men in disguise, to seize the Fortress of Niagara? A proof like this, of returning friendship, would be interesting and masterly; but from the numbers adequate to the execution of such a plan, who must be brought acquainted with the scheme, it more than probably would be known by the enemy, and of course be defeated. Next to this would it be possible to surprize it ourselves, without their aid (or with the assistance of a few trusty guides only before the frost breaks up,) by a rapid movement of an adequate number of men in sleds from Fort Schuyler? The enterprize, more than probably, would be very unexpected, and consequently, likely on that account to succeed, if the Wood Creek, Onondago River, and border of the

lake Ontario were in such a state as not to impede the progress of Slaies with proper degree of rapidity.

If there are obstacles in the way of either of these projects which may seem too difficult to be surmounted, cannot some successful attempt be made by a detachment from the garrison at Fort Schuyler, the Indians, or a party of both, on the vessels in lake Ontario which are, I believe usually laid up at Buck Island?

I need not tell you that these are crude, undigested thoughts—thrown out more with a view of learning your sentiments of them, than as the result of deliberate thinking. If you should hold a treaty, or have a meeting with the Indians, such information may be derived from the most intelligent of them, as to shew how practicable either of the projects here mentioned is.

There is no doubt but that Lake Champlain is sufficiently closed—but how long may we expect it to continue so? Will the Snow be any impediment to the Passage of Slaies to St. Johns? Is it known whether the borders of Lake Ontario (especially the hither side which is the most exposed to the boisterous Winds) are ever so frozen as to admit a passage for Slaies? What may be the difficulties of getting from Fort Schuyler to Oswego?

Since the date of my last we have had the virtue and patience of the Army put to the severest trial. Sometimes it has been 5 or six days together without bread; at other times as many days without meat; and once or twice two or three days without either. I hardly thought it possible, at one period, that we

should be able to keep it together, nor could it have been done but for the exertions of the Magistrates in the several Counties of this State, on whom I was obliged to call, expose our situation to them, and in plain terms declare, that we were reduced to the alternative of disbanding or catering for ourselves, unless the magistrates would afford us their aid. I allotted to each County a certain proportion of flour or grain—and a certain number of Cattle, to be delivered on certain days; and for the honor of the Magistrates and good disposition of the people, I must add that my requisitions were punctually complied with, and in many Counties exceeded. Nothing but this great exertion could have saved the army from dissolution, or starving; as we were bereft of every hope from the Commissaries. At one time the Soldiers eat every kind of horse food but Hay. Buck Wheat, common wheat, Rye, and Indn. Corn was the composition of the Meal which made their bread. As an Army they bore it with a most heroic patience; but sufferings like these, accompanied by the want of Cloaths, Blankets, &c., will produce frequent desertions in all armies and so it happened with us, tho' it did not excite a mutiny. * * *

TO THE CHEVALIER DE LA LUZERNE.

HEAD-QUARTERS, MORRISTOWN,
4 February, 1780.

SIR,

Major Galvan delivered to me the letter, which your Excellency did me the honor to write to me on the 23d of January, and to which I have paid all the

attention the importance of its contents demands. I am much flattered by this commencement of a correspondence, from which I have every thing to gain; and equally indebted for the interesting communications it affords.

It is a happy circumstance, that the efforts made by the British court for obtaining troops in Germany are attended with so little success. This will naturally increase their exertions for procuring men in this country, and will no doubt make them more solicitous for effecting the exchange or release in some way or other of their prisoners in our hands. It will be well, if, in the negotiations on this subject, we can extract concessions favorable to those, which may take place in Europe, and you may depend the experiment shall be fully tried. But, from the aspect of the late propositions on the part of the enemy, I should not entertain any sanguine hopes of the success of this experiment. The reinforcement they would derive from a full compliance with their proposals is not calculated at more than ten or eleven hundred private men; and this seems hardly to be an object of sufficient magnitude to induce them to concede to points of the nature, which your Excellency's information supposes; especially, as you emphatically express it, "after having sought with so much affectation to make the thirteen States be considered as subjected to the English domination." The offers made through Major-General Phillips are far more moderate, than any that have hitherto come from them, and appear in a great measure to have been

influenced by his personal solicitations, dictated by an extreme anxiety to be released from captivity. But notwithstanding the matter in its present form wears to me the appearance I have mentioned, I shall not neglect any measure, which it may be in my power to take to improve the intimation your Excellency has given; and I entreat you to be assured, that I shall endeavor to make the event confirm the opinion you do me the honor to entertain, that nothing will be done derogatory to the magnanimous part your court has acted, or to the honor or interest of the United States.[1]

The inconsistency of the court of London, so well delineated by that of Madrid in the extract you had the goodness to annex, would appear extraordinary, if their whole conduct in the course of the war did not exhibit many similar examples. But it is evi-

[1] M. de la Luzerne had represented in strong language the inexpediency of yielding to any but the most favorable terms in the exchange of prisoners. He had just received intelligence from Europe, that the British had failed in their application to the German courts for additional recruits, and that Sir Henry Clinton had been instructed to use all available means for effecting an exchange of all the prisoners. The Chevalier de la Luzerne took another view of the subject, also, as bearing on the independence and national dignity of the United States. He sent to General Washington an extract from the *Memorial* of the English ambassador in Spain to the court of Madrid, respecting a mediation for a truce with France, dated March 28th, in which the ambassador spoke of the colonies as subject to the English domination. M. de la Luzerne hence enjoined the importance of treating, in regard to the exchange of prisoners, on the footing of perfect equality. "An act of this nature," said he, "may be of the greatest utility to the negotiation of Congress in Europe, when to all the facts, of which the court of Madrid makes mention, may be added a cartel regulated on the basis of a perfect parity, which would be judging beforehand the question of your independence. I congratulate myself, that the negotiation is in your hands; and I am well persuaded that nothing will pass derogatory to the part, which my court has taken in acknowledging the independence and the perfect sovereignty of the United States."—*Sparks*.

dent, that their refusing to consider these States as independent, of fact, during a negotiation, was a mere pretext to cover their unwillingness to concur in the pacific views of his Catholic Majesty; and the Memorial from the British ambassador shows, that they were artfully aiming to effect a separation of interests between France and these States, the better to prosecute their hostile designs against either or both.[1]

I thank your Excellency for the agreeable intelligence you give me, of his Most Christian Majesty's intentions to send over succors of arms and ammunition. It is a new and valuable proof of his friendship, and will be of essential utility. I agree with you, that there ought to be no relaxation in the measures otherwise intended to be taken to procure the necessary supplies of those articles.

[1] The court of Spain, in an *Exposition of the Motives* of their conduct, relative to England, had used the following language in regard to the state of the controversy between England and the United States:

"Among the propositions of the *ultimatum* of the king of Spain, there is one for which the British cabinet has affected to have the greatest repugnance. It is the proposition, which imports that the colonies shall be treated as independent *of fact*, during the interval of the truce; and it is extraordinary, it is even ridiculous, that the court of London, after having treated the colonies during the war as independent, not only *of fact*, but also *of right*, should have any repugnance to treat with them as independent only *of fact*, during the truce, or suspension of arms. The convention of Saratoga, General Burgoyne considered as a lawful prisoner, the exchange and liberation of colonial prisoners, the nomination of commissioners to go and seek the Americans at their own home, the fact of having asked peace of them and to treat with them or with Congress, and a hundred other facts of this nature authorized by the court of London, have been genuine signs of an acknowledgment of the independence of the Colonies. The English nation itself can best judge and decide, if all these acts are as compatible with the honor of the British crown, as would be that of granting to the Colonies by the interposition of his Catholic Majesty a suspension of arms, to discuss their differences and to treat them during this interval as independent *of fact*."

I am sensibly mortified, that the present situation of affairs will by no means suffer me to yield to the desire I have of paying you my respects in Philadelphia; and I shall impatiently look for the opportunity of doing it here, which your Excellency promises me in the course of this month. Besides the important objects of public utility, which I am authorized to hope from it, I shall take pleasure in every occasion of testifying to you those sentiments of respect and esteem, with which I have the honor to be your Excellency's, &c. * * *

TO MAJOR BENJAMIN TALLMADGE.

MORRISTOWN, 5 February, 1780.

DR. SIR,

I have received two letters of yours from Weathersfield, one dated the 15th of Jany., the other without a date. By Colo. Blaine, who I expect will be the bearer of this I send Twenty guineas, and two phials containing the Stain and counter part of the stain for C—— Junior, which I wish may be got to him with as much safety and despatch as the case will conveniently admit of. It is my further most earnest wish, that you would press him to open, if possible, a communication with me by a more direct rout than the present. His accts. are intelligent, clear, and satisfactory—consequently would be valuable, but owing to the circuitous rout, thro' which they are transmitted, I can derive no immediate or important advantages from them; and, as I rely upon his intelligence, the

only satisfaction that I derive from it is, that other accts. are either confirmed, or corrected by his, after they have been some time received. I am sensible of the delicacy of his situation and the necessity of caution. For these reasons it is, I have hitherto forborne, and am still unwilling to mention persons to him as the vehicles of conveyance, lest they shd. not prove so trustworthy and prudent as we could wish. But if he cannot form the first link of the chain of communication himself, and will let me know it, I think I can name one or two men to him, who will receive and convey to me (through others) such intelligence as he may think important ; but he should avoid making use of the stain upon a blank sheet of Paper, (which is the usual way of its coming to me). This circumstance alone is sufficient to raise suspicion. A much better way is to write a letter a little in the Tory stile, with some mixture of family matters, and, between the lines and on the remaining part of the sheet, communicate with the stain the intended intelligence. Such a letter would pass through the hands of the enemy unsuspected ; and, even if the agents should be unfaithful or negligent, no discovery would be made to his prejudice, as these people are not to know that there is concealed writing in the letter, and the intelligent part of it would be an evidence in his favor.

You will be so good as to communicate these several matters to him, in a full and clear manner, and inform me of the result. The choice of a proper name or character to address his Letters to, if they

come through the channel I have recommended, is a matter worthy of consideration. I have written to Genl. Poor to furnish a man, as you desire, and have him sent to Lieutt. Brewster at Fairfield. I am, &c.

TO BARON STEUBEN, AT PHILADELPHIA.

HEAD-QUARTERS, MORRISTOWN,
8 February, 1780.

SIR,

I have received your letter of the 26th bro't down to the 29th of January, with the papers annexed, and have carefully considered the contents, on which I shall give you my sentiments with freedom and confidence. The principal point, on which your memorial to Congress turns, is the force requisite for the next campaign. To determine this on good grounds, we ought first to settle the following question; Will it be in our power to make an offensive, or must we content ourselves with a defensive campaign?

It is not possible to decide this question without a more intimate knowledge of our resources of finance, than I at present possess, and without ascertaining whether our allies can afford a squadron for an effectual coöperation on this continent. I think with vigorous exertions we may raise a sufficient number of men for offensive operations, if we were able to maintain them; but, from the view I have of our affairs, I do not believe the state of our treasury will permit this without assistance from abroad. Whether this is to be obtained, Congress alone can judge.

On the other hand, from the particular situation of the enemy's posts in this quarter, I should not advise to calculate measures on the principle of expelling them, unless we had certain assurances that an adequate naval force will be ready to coöperate with us through all contingencies. If a foreign aid of money and a fleet are to be depended upon, I should then recommend that all our dispositions should have reference to an offensive and decisive campaign; and in this case I should ask at least one third more men than your estimate, to be immediately raised by a general draft.

But as I doubt whether these two preliminaries can be placed upon such a footing of certainty, as to justify our actg. in consequence, I imagine we must of necessity adopt the principle of a defensive campaign, and pursue a system of the most absolute œconomy. On this principle, however, if I understand your estimate, I do not think it will be more than sufficient. I suppose you mean the 23,000 for our total number. When the deductions for unavoidable casualties are made, this number will give us less than twenty thousand for our efficient operating force. This is as little as we can well have to contain the enemy within bounds, and prevent their making any further progress. Including the detachment which lately sailed from New York, they have near 2,000 men fit for actual service in these states; to say nothing of the recruits they will probably send over to complete their battalions, which will be an augmentation of force. For these reasons I approve the estimate you

have proposed, as best suited to our present circumstances.

The number of cavalry you propose is in good proportion, and in a military sense necessary. Cavalry, if there is an active scene to the Southward, will be particularly useful there; but the question of expense is a very serious one, and, like the rest, must be referred to those who are acquainted with our *money* resources. Another point is, whether the regiments had better be incorporated with each other and completed or left as they are and completed to such a standard as will give the number of men required. A Committee of Congress, as you have been informed, sent me a proposal, which has been referred to their consideration, for reducing the number of battalions, and asked my opinion upon it. Though I was fully sensible of the inconveniences, which will infallibly attend a reduction, I did not dissuade from it, principally upon two accounts: one, a conviction that the embarrassments in our finances require every expedient for saving expense: the other, the incompetency of the present number of officers to the present number of corps. But though I do not disapprove, I am far from being much attached to this plan. Congress can best balance the advantages and disadvantages, and determine which preponderate.

I sincerely wish what you recommend with respect to Magazines could be carried into execution, but I fear it will be impracticable in the present extent. Every thing, however, that is possible ought to be attempted. There is no danger of the Maga-

zines exceeding our wants; and we have been under dreadful embarrassments, through the whole course of the war, from temporary and precarious supplies. The arms ought, at all events, to be provided. I have issued an order requiring the returns demanded by the Board of War, to be made out with all despatch. They will be forwarded as fast as they are collected.

There are some points of inferior importance in your memorial which I approve that do not require a particular enumeration. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO GOVERNOR LIVINGSTON.

19 February, 1780.

SIR,

I have just received a letter from Mr. Symmes, one of the Supreme Judges of this State, transmitting to me a copy of a letter of the 14th instant to the hon-

[1] "I had recd. the Resolve of Congress, of which you enclosed me a copy, immediately from the president, and in consequence of it instantly gave the necessary directions for the proper Returns to be brought in, to enable me to furnish the States with an account of the deficiencies of their Quotas of Troops. This, from the dispersed State of several of the independent Corps, the artillery, the Cavalry, and Artificers, will take up a considerable time; and it is very much to be feared that the greatest part, if not the whole of the time allowed for bringing the levies into the field, will elapse before the returns can be collected, digested, and transmitted to the remote States. The returns lately called for by the Board of War are preparing, and those belonging to the army at this cantonment will be forwarded in a day or two; those from the detachments of the army at West point, Danbury, and the Horse in Connecticut, as soon as possible."—*Washington to Baron Steuben*, 18 February, 1780.

orable House of Assembly, on the subject of complaints made to him by soldiers in the Continental army, of their being detained in service beyond the period for which they were engaged, and recommending the speedy direction and inquiry of the Legislature into the matter.

I doubt not Mr. Symmes took this step from commendable motives; but I think it my duty to apprize your Excellency, that a compliance with his recommendation could not fail to be attended with the most pernicious consequences. The true source of the discontents he speaks of is a dissimilarity in the terms of enlistment for the army. Those soldiers, who are truly engaged for the war, are dissatisfied at seeing others, many of whom have received equal, some greater emoluments, returning home, and having it in their power to obtain new bounties and new encouragements for their services, while they, held to their original engagements, are deprived of these privileges. They, therefore, frequently deny their being enlisted for the war, and make a variety of pretences to extricate themselves. Frequent applications have been made to me, and inquiries have taken place in consequence; but in almost every instance it has been found, that either the complaints have been entirely groundless, or too weakly supported to justify the discharge of the men. The cases most in their favor, which sometimes occur, are these. The original enlistments having been lost, officers resigning or dismissed from the service have given certificates of their being engaged for limited

periods; but where these certificates are found to clash with the constant returns and muster-rolls of the regiment, which are certainly much more authentic criterions, they are disregarded. The circumstance mentioned by Mr. Symmes, of officers, on their resignation or discharge, turning over their men on oath to the succeeding officers, is founded on misinformation, for no such custom prevails in the army. The evil proceeds in a great measure from the reverse of this cause, the one I have mentioned above. It is probable enough, from the difficulty in ascertaining the fact in particular cases, that some men may be injured. But I verily believe the instances are rare, and that in general all possible justice is done to the men in this respect. I am at least conscious, that I have uniformly cultivated this spirit in the officers, and discountenanced the contrary.

I shall give your Excellency an example, which will serve to confirm the representation I have made. The Pensylvania soldiers, from the commencement, were almost universally engaged for the war. When they saw the Eastern levies, in the beginning of last campaign, who had received enormous bounties, (many a thousand pound & upwards,[1]) for a few months, they began to compare situations, to murmur, and to dispute their engagements. To remove these discontents, Congress, at my instance, were pleased to order a gratuity of 100 dollars to all men

[1] This is to be understood of the paper currency, at its depreciated value.

enlisted for the war, previous to the 23d of Jany., 1779. The intention of this gratuity was clearly explained. The men received it, and gave receipts expressive of that intention. They begin now to revive their former dissatisfaction, and many desertions have taken place in consequence; so unreasonable are they, or rather so fatal is the influence of that system of short enlistments, which in the first period of the war laid the foundation of all our subsequent misfortunes.

From this view of the subject I flatter myself, that you will readily perceive the inexpediency of the State interposing in the affair. Such countenance to the disposition now prevailing would soon make it epidemical. New pretenders would immediately start up in every line; new expectations, hopes, and reasonings would be excited, the discontent would become general, and our military system would be nearly unhinged. Instead of gratifying the ill humor of the men, by a mark of extraordinary attention, decisive measures to suppress it will, in my opinion, be most consistent with justice to the public and sound policy. I confine my remarks to the inexpediency of an interference by the legislature of this State. Your Excellency's discernment will suggest other considerations, which are of so delicate a nature, that I shall decline particularizing them. I shall only add, that I have the fullest confidence the legislature will act with perfect wisdom and propriety upon the occasion, and that I have the honor to be with the highest respect, &c.

TO LIEUTENANT-COLONEL WILLETT.

MORRISTOWN, 22 February, 1780.

SIR,

I have received your letter of the 18th.

Secresy in the business you have been requested to put in train is so essentially necessary that those who are willing to embark in it may rest assured that not even a whisper shall be heard from hence.

It is to be presumed that every circumspection and caution that the case will admit of will be used to prevent a discovery of any of the agents; but if notwithstanding the one at Secaucus should be suspected and prosecuted, I must in behalf of the public stand between him and the consequences of a prosecution. It may not be amiss, however, to observe by way of caution—that the great pursuit of those who heretofore have been employed in this business, is traffic, and this being carried on with avidity, the end for wch. they were engaged was defeated because suspicions on our part, and a desire of rendering themselves useful to the enemy to accomplish with more ease their own lucrative plans, give a turn to the business which operated much to our prejudice.

I do not know how easy it may be for the agent at Secaucus to obtain free access to the Intelligence at New York—but it is absolutely necessary he should —It is the hinge on which the whole turns and without it, nothing can be done to effect—Hence, is it not necessary to have a person on the No. River, at or near Bergentown, who can, at all times, have equal access to the City, and Secaucus unsuspected?

Is it not necessary also to have some person between Second River and head Quarters?—These matters you will consider and determine on—I need not add that the fewer hands a business of this sort is in the better it will be executed, and less risk there is of a discovery.

Verbal accounts in passing through several hands, and some heads, which may not be very clear, are liable to such transmutation as serve to confound and perplex rather than inform—for this reason the Agent in New York should give all his intelligence in writing, which may be done fully and with security (even if the letters should fall into the hands of the enemy) in the manner I shall hereafter communicate. His Letters may be addressed to the Agent at Second River, or any other (more proper) person, if one can be thought of, but whether he will write in his own name, or under an assumed one, must be left to himself to determine; when he comes to understand the mode for communicating the intelligence.

The persons intermediate between him and me, (serving as mere vehicles of conveyance) will know nothing of the contents, consequently the avenues leading to a discovery of the person in New York (who should be shielded on all sides) will be much lessened and guarded.

The compensation for these services had better be fixed—beforehand—because loose agreements are seldom rewarded to the mutual satisfaction of both parties—I shall be glad to see you to-morrow morn-

ing that I may have some further conversation with you on this subject.—With esteem & regard, I am, &c.

CIRCULAR LETTER TO THE STATES.

HEAD QUARTERS, MORRISTOWN,
24 February, 1780.

SIR :—

You will have received I make no doubt a copy of an act of Congress of the 9th instant, ascertaining the quotas of the non-commissioned officers and privates to be furnished by the respective states for the ensuing campaign, and directing the men in the additional corps—the guards, artillery, and the horse, and the regimental artificers in the departments of the quarter-master-general and commissary general of military stores, as well as those of the battalions in the state levies, whose services do not expire before the last of September next, to be counted as part of the quotas of the states to which they respectively belong. The quota of the state of New Hampshire is fixed at 1215 [1] and I have now the honor to inclose you a special return of the non-commissioned officers and privates in her three battalions, and of those belonging to her in Jackson's and Hazen's regiments, and Lamb's regiment of artillery, designating in a particular manner, the proportion engaged for the war and the periods when and in what proportion the services of the rest will expire. You will be pleased to observe that by the act, men whose engagements expire before the last of September next, as I have already taken the liberty to mention, are not to be computed as part of the 1215 ; and therefore according to the return inclosed, the deficiency of men to be raised is 695. There are one or two corps besides those I have mentioned, of which I have not yet obtained returns ; in which possibly there may be a few men belonging to the state. When I procure these, if this should be the case, I shall take the earliest occasion to communicate it and their number. I would observe before I conclude, that this return bears the fullest number of men under every description the

[1] The details varied for each state.

state can have in her three battallions and the other corps which it comprehends, and they would most probably be found, if an actual inspection could take place, to fall a good deal short of the complement, as there is always a material difference between an army on paper and its real strength. A comparative view between the total of an army, as borne upon every general return and the column of present fit for duty, and the absentees that can be accounted for as certainly existing, demonstrates this beyond question. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE BOARD OF WAR.

HEAD QUARTERS, MORRISTOWN,
26 February, 1780.

GENTLEMEN,

I have received the enclosed proceedings of a General Court Martial held by order of the Board. As I am not informed of any provision having been made for vesting the power of appointing Courts Martial in the Board (which is too confined in many respects), I should not think myself at liberty to confirm the proceedings of the present Court, were there no objections to the manner of the proceedings themselves. But they are too summary and the evidence not fully enough stated, to justify an approbation of decisions which affect life.

No mention is made of the corps to which the prisoners belong. The corporal punishments too are irregular, exceeding the limits prescribed by our military code, which is in this instance also defective—and in the case of Capt. Parke,—he is found guilty of the additional crime of forgery, though the charge against him only relates to fraud.

I flatter myself I need not assure the Board, that the scruples now suggested do not proceed from the least disposition to bring their powers in any instance into question, which is the remotest of anything from my intention. But as the regular administration of justice as well in the military as civil line is of the essential importance, and as the regular constitution of Courts is a fundamental point towards it, the Board will be sensible it is my duty to be satisfied on this head before I give my concurrence in any trials where there is room to doubt. I shall therefore be obliged to them to give me the necessary information concerning their powers in this respect. Lest upon recollection it may be found that sufficient provision has not been made, I enclose an order for holding a new Court, that the offenders may not escape; and I could wish a hint may be given to the Gentleman acting as Judge advocate, to be more explicit and particular in designating the circumstances of the crime and of the evidence. I enclose the proceedings for the inspection of the Board. * * *

TO MAJOR-GENERAL LINCOLN, IN SOUTH CAROLINA.

HD-QRS., MORRIS TOWN, 27 February, 1780.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have been successively favored with your letters of the 7th of November, 23d of December, and 8th of January last.

I am extremely happy to find, both for the public and for your sake, that your prospects were less

gloomy when you wrote your two last letters, than when you wrote the first. I hope you have had the time necessary to complete your defences on the land side, and will be able effectually to baffle every attempt of the enemy in your quarter. Hitherto our affairs to the southward have certainly been more prosperous than could have been expected from circumstances, and, if the issue is not favorable, I am thoroughly persuaded it will not be your fault. The succession of tempestuous weather, which immediately followed the departure of the fleet that sailed from New York the latter end of December, we have been flattering ourselves, will at least retard and disconcert their southern operation. We have yet had no distinct account of them; it will be fortunate indeed if they have been driven off and dispersed.

In addition to the advices you were obliging enough to communicate, I have just seen official accounts, from the Governor of Havanna, of the success of the Spaniards in Florida.[1] If the remaining posts fall, it will be a very important stroke, and in all probability the operations there will have a favorable influence upon our affairs in your quarter. Though perhaps it may not be probable, it is not impossible, the British General, if he has discretionary power, on hearing of the progress of the Spaniards in the Floridas, may suspend his original plan and turn his attention that way, and endeavor to defend their own territories

[1] The capture of the British forts at Baton Rouge and Natchez, by a party of Spaniards under General Galvez, Governor of Louisiana. Five hundred and fifty prisoners were taken, besides military stores and other property.

rather than attempt conquests. Don Juan de Miralles, the Spanish agent, in a letter of the 18th communicating the foregoing intelligence, has the following paragraph:

"By royal order, I am very strongly charged to influence your Excellency to make the greatest diversion with the troops of the United States against those of the enemy in Georgia, to the effect of attracting their attention and disabling them from sending succors to Pensacola and Mobile, which the Governor of Louisiana is to attack, auxiliated with sea and land forces, which were prepared at Havannah with all things needful, and ready to sail when the station would permit."

This I transmit you for your Government, satisfied that you will do every thing to effect the diversion desired, which the situation of your force and that of the enemy, combined with other circumstances, will permit. If they act offensively against the Carolinas, your whole attention will necessarily be engaged at home; but, if they should direct their force elsewhere, you may possibly have it in your power to pursue measures favorable to the operations of the Spaniards, and to the immediate interests of the United States.

You will since have been informed, that your information with respect to the Virginia troops being detached to the southward was good. Though they could be ill spared from this army, I thought we should have less to fear here, than you there, without them; and it appeared upon the whole advisable to throw the weight of Virginia into the defence of our southern extremity. I should have given you early

notice of it, but I relied upon its being done by Congress. With the most affectionate regard, I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO DON JUAN DE MIRALLES.

HEAD-QUARTERS, MORRISTOWN,
27 February, 1780.

SIR,

* * * * * *

The want of any certain intelligence of the fleet, which sailed from New York, I should attribute to their having been disconcerted in their voyage by the tempestuous weather, which prevailed for some time after their departure. A variety of circumstances combining proved, that the intention of that embarkation was for the southern States. All my intelligence agreed in this point. The composition of the detachment; Governor Martin and several refugees from South and North Carolina having embarked in the fleet; the current of the English accounts, by which it appears that General Clinton was expected to be in South Carolina as early as November, in which he was probably prevented by Count d'Estaing's operations in Georgia; these circumstances conspire to satisfy me, that the Carolinas were the objects. But, notwithstanding this, I think the precautions you are taking to put the Spanish dominions upon their guard are wise. It can have no ill consequence; and it is advisable to be provided against all contingencies. It would not be surprising if the British general, on hearing of the progress of the Spanish arms in the Floridas, should relinquish his

first design, and go to the defence of their own territories.

I shall with the greatest pleasure comply with your request for giving you information of all the movements of the enemy, that come to my knowledge, which may in any manner interest the plans of your court; and I have written to General Lincoln agreeably to your intimation. Every motive will induce him to do whatever may be in his power to effect the diversion desired. If the enemy prosecute the plan, which I suppose to have been originally intended, he will necessarily find his whole attention employed at home on the defensive; but, if they direct their force to another quarter, I am persuaded he will make the best use of his to give them all possible annoyance and distraction. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

[1] Don Juan Miralles was recommended by the Governor of Havana as a gentleman of fortune, who resided in that city, but who, while on a voyage to Spain, had been compelled by some accident, that happened to the ship in which he was embarked, to enter the harbor of Charleston, in South Carolina. The Governor wrote, also, that Don Juan Miralles, being dispirited by his misfortunes at sea, had resolved to remain in the United States till he should find a safe opportunity to return to Spain, and requested in his behalf the civilities and protection of General Washington. The truth is, however, that Miralles was an unofficial agent of the Spanish government, and was introduced in this way, that he might obtain a knowledge of the affairs of the United States, and communicate it to the ministers of the Spanish court. It was uncertain how far he acted under the immediate authority of the Spanish government. A letter from Luzerne to Vergennes throws some light on the subject. Luzerne wrote that Miralles confessed to him that he had no instructions directly from the court of Spain; that his correspondence was with the Governor of Havana; that the Spanish ministry had signified their general approbation of his conduct down to the end of August last; that he had received a letter from M. Galvez stating that he would be appointed minister to the United States when the king should think proper to send one. Congress showed every mark of respect to this agent, which was due to his personal character, but carefully avoided treating with him in any public capacity, except through the intervention of

TO LORD STIRLING.

[PRIVATE.]

MORRIS-TOWN, 5 March, 1780.

MY LORD,

I have read the orders, wch. you had framed for your division. They are certainly good; but in substance, except in a very few instances, are very explicitly enjoined by the regulations, and have been reiterated at different periods in the general orders, antecedent to the promulgation of the established "regulations for the Order and Discipline of the Troops," and since in many particular ones by a reference to them; as your Lordship may perceive by recurring to the Orderly Book. At our last

the French minister. Congress would not commit themselves by treating with a person who was not empowered directly by the Spanish court.—*MS. Letter from Luzerne to Vergennes*, March 13th.—*Sparks*.

His mission, whatever its real character, was terminated by his death.

"I am extremely sorry to communicate to your Excellency the painful intelligence of the death of Don Juan de Miralles. This unfortunate event happened at my quarters the day before yesterday, and his remains were yesterday interred with all the respect due to his character and merit. He did me the honor of a visit, in company with the minister of France, and was seized on the day of his arrival with a violent bilious complaint, which, after nine days' continuance, put a period to his life, notwithstanding all the efforts of the most skilful physicians we were able to procure. Your Excellency will have the goodness to believe, that I took pleasure in performing every friendly office to him during his illness, and that no care or attention in our power was omitted towards his comfort or restoration. I the more sincerely sympathize with you in the loss of so estimable a friend, as, ever since his residence with us, I have been happy in ranking him among the number of mine. It must, however, be some consolation to his connexions to know, that in this country he has been universally esteemed, and will be universally regretted.

"May I request the favor of your Excellency to present my respects to the lady and family of our deceased friend, and to assure them how much I participate in their affliction on this melancholy occasion?"—*Washington to Don Diego José Navarro*, 30 April, 1780.

Congress, or yr. Xc.; but, if the Persons issuing them would devote, as duty indispensably requires, a reasonable portion of their time to a personal and close inspection into the affairs of their respective commands; would frequently parade their Regiments, and compare the actual strength of them, their arms, accoutrements, and cloathes, with the returns, and have the deficiencies, (if any there be,) satisfactorily accounted for and provided, agreeably to the establishment of the army; would see that the regulations, the general orders, and their own, were carried into execution, where practicable, or report the causes of failure when they cannot; that all returns are made in due form, in proper time, and correctly, comparing one return with another, in order to prevent mistakes, correct abuses, and do justice to the public; and that, in visiting such parts of the line, and such particular corps, as are entrusted to their care, praise is bestowed on the deserving, reprehension, and, (where necessary,) punishment on the negligent; the good effect would be almost instantaneously felt. Frequent visits and inspection into matters of this kind would produce more real good in one month, than volumes of the best digested orders, that the wit of man can devise, wd. accomplish in seven years.

Were it not for the infinity of perplexing business, that is referred to and comes before me from every quarter; the multiplicity of Letters and papers I have to read and consider, many of which originate in the want of application and due attention being

given by the Genl. officers to their respective commands, which brings a variety of applications to head-Qrs., that ought to be settled in the respective lines, I shd. devote much more of my time to the military parts of my duty. Unhappily, while necessity with-holds me from these attentions, a want of being sufficiently impressed with its importance, or some other cause, operates with equal force on others; and the few rides I am able to make to the Camp, and the hours wch. I can devote to the business of the line, never fail producing mortifying proofs of inattention and relaxation of discipline. The Country, in all my excursions, I find spread over with soldiers, notwithstanding the pointed orders which have been issued to restrain them, and to discountenance a practice, wch. has been found pregnant of desertion, robbery, and even murders, and totally repugnant to every principle of discipline and the Rules laid down for our governmt.

This, my Lord, is a free and friendly representn. of facts. Your letter drew it from *me* to *you* at this time; but I shall take occasion, so soon as the Genl. officers assemble, to require in explicit terms from them a conduct conformable to these sentimts. in future; for without it there is no possibility in the present perplexity of affairs, and the divided attention I am obliged to give to the numberless objects, wch. press upon me, to move the military machine with any degree of propriety without their assistance. With much esteem and regard, I am your Lordship's, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD QUARTERS, MORRIS TOWN,
6 March, 1780.

SIR,

I have been honored with your Excellency's Letters of the 21st and 22d ulto.

I thank you for the communication you have been pleased to give me, with respect to the Fleet and embarkation at Havana, and I am in hopes we shall hear of the Spaniards having made a successful stroke against one or both of the places you have mentioned. As to the Enemy's Fleet supposed to be bound to the southward, from the violent and constant storms that prevailed for several days after their departure from New York, I still think they must have been a good deal deranged and injured.

With respect to Capt Greene and the other hostages given at the Cedars, it cannot be in my power to do more than to endeavor to effect their exchange. This will be attemped, as it constantly has been; but it will rest with the enemy to consent to it or not, as they may think proper. Hitherto the latter has been their choice; and, if they persevere in it, the hostages I should suppose must be bound by their engagements. It seems to me, that this must be the case in every instance of parole, and in the present the engagements appear to be obligatory upon the officers in a very peculiar manner, as the indulgence of Parole was granted after the Treaty was set aside, for the performance of which they had been given as a security.[1]

[1] Captain Greene was one of the prisoners taken at the Cedars in May, 1776, and one of the hostages given up to the enemy in consequence of the conven-

I find myself under the necessity of transmitting to Your Excellency the copy of a letter I received Yesterday from the Quarter Master General, pointing out afresh the distresses of his department. As Your Excellency I presume, has received the original letter of the 16th ulto. to which he alludes—I have not inclosed a copy of it. I do not know what can or will be done to give relief; but from all I hear and all I see—things really appear to me in this department to be in a very alarming train—and to threaten the most interesting and fatal consequences. The inclosure No. 2 (a copy of a letter of the 24th ulto. from Colo. Biddle to the Quarter Master Genl.) will shew too how we are, and are like to be distressed on account of forage. In consequence of this representation, I prevailed on Colo. Biddle, as the most eligible plan that occurred to me, to wait on the Assembly at Trenton and to lay our difficulties and apprehensions on this head before them, but what they will or can do I cannot determine. I am very apprehensive that we shall experience great difficulties for want of proper supplies. * * *

It is very sincerely to be wished, that the States may furnish the several articles of supplies required of them. It will be very interesting for them to do it,

tion between General Arnold and Captain Forster. The hostages were sent to New York, and on the 1st of January, 1777, Captain Greene was set at liberty on his parole. By a recent order from the British commander, he was required, according to the terms of his parole, to return to New York. Under these circumstances Captain Greene petitioned Congress for relief. The petition was referred to the Commander-in-chief, who was authorized and directed to take such measures in regard to the hostages as he should judge expedient, —*Journals*, February 19th.

and in such a manner, that the army may not either be reduced to a situation of want, or our operations be cramped or prohibited by an apprehension of it. I shall take the earliest occasion, after it is in my power, to inform the respective States of the places that appear to me the most proper for the supplies to be deposited at. It will be necessary to consult the Quartr. Master-Genl. and Commissary-Genl. upon the subject, the latter of whom is now absent from camp on business at the Eastward.[1] I have the honor to be, &c.[2]

[1] Such were the financial embarrassments of Congress, and the depreciation of the Continental currency, that a new plan was adopted for procuring supplies for the army. Specific quantities of flour, meat, and other articles, were apportioned to each State. These were to be collected, deposited, and delivered at such places within the States respectively, as the Commander-in-chief should designate. The scheme proved very defective in practice, as no times were specified for depositing the articles, and there was no penalty for neglect. Moreover, some of the States were so far from the operations of the army, that the cost of transportation was greater than the entire value of the articles in the vicinity of the army.—*Sparks.*

This measure practically threw the care of maintaining the army upon the States, altering the complexion of the powers of Congress. "It is to be observed that the situation of Congress has undergone a total change from what it originally was. Whilst they exercised the indefinite power of emitting money on the credit of their constituents, they had the whole wealth and resources of the continent within their command, and could go on with their affairs independently and as they pleased. Since the resolution passed for shutting the press, this power has been entirely given up, and they are now as dependent on the States as the King of England is on Parliament. They can neither enlist, pay nor feed a single soldier, nor execute any other purpose, but as the means are first put into their hands. Unless the legislatures are sufficiently attentive to this change of circumstances, and act in conformity to it, every thing must necessarily go wrong, or rather must come to a total stop. All that Congress can do in future will be to administer public affairs with prudence, vigor, and economy. In order to do which they have sent a committee to Headquarters with ample powers, in concert with the Commander-in-Chief and the heads of the Departments, to reform the various abuses which prevail, and to make such arrangements as will best guard against a relapse into them."—*Madison to Jefferson*, 6 May, 1780.

[2] Read in Congress, March 16th. Referred to the Board of Treasury.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL ST. CLAIR, AND LIEUTENANT-COLONELS EDWARD CARRINGTON AND ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

INSTRUCTIONS.

GENTLEMEN,

The powers herewith authorize you to proceed to Amboy on Thursday the 9th instant, to meet commissioners on the part of the enemy, for the purpose of settling a General Cartel. You will perceive what has been already done in this business by the papers accompanying this. * * * The only instructions I have to give you are these, that you transact nothing under your commission but upon principles of perfect equality and on a national ground. If the enemy will not treat with you on this footing, you will put an end to the negotiation. But after your official business is over, I wish you in private conversation to enter into a discussion of the proposals, so as to remove any difficulties they contain, and prepare the way for some future particular agreement, which may give relief to our officers and men in captivity.

If you enter into a general Cartel, you must of necessity include the southern prisoners; but, if you are obliged to confine yourselves to what I now recommend, you will avoid including them. The proposals appear to me generally liberal, though in some respects exceptionable. The tariff, however, is moderate enough. Having entire confidence in your judgment and discretion, I think it unnecessary to enter into a detail of the exceptionable parts; persuaded that they will readily occur to you, and that you will take proper steps to have them amended. The settlement of accounts is a point of importance and difficulty. As the matter now stands, I am unable to give you any explicit directions on the subject. If you are like to enter into a general Cartel, you will immediately advise me, and I will obtain further instructions from Congress. If this is not the case, you will hardly be able to draw any engagements from the enemy on this head, and you will perceive this point is not to be made a preliminary nor ultimatum. You will do the best you can, endeavoring by all means to engage the British Commissioners to advance a sufficient sum of money to pay the debts of our officers for board and

the like, and enable them to leave their captivity. You will communicate to me from time to time any matters you may desire my advice upon, and it shall chearfully be afforded. I sincerely wish you a successful and honorable issue to your commission. Given at Head Quarters, Morristown, 8 March, 1780.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

HEAD-QRS., MORRISTOWN,
18th March, 1780.

MY DEAR MARQS.,

Your polite and obliging letter of the 10th of Octr., from Havre came to my hands since the beging. of this month. It filled me with a pleasure intermixed with pain. To hear that you were well, to find you breathing the same affectionate sentiments that ever have most conspicuously marked your conduct towards me, and that you continued to deliver them with unabated attachmt., contributes greatly to my happiness. On the other hand, to hear that not one of the many letters, which I have written to you since you left this continent, had arrived safe, was not only surprizing but mortifying, notwithstanding you have the goodness to acct. for it on its true principles. With much truth I can assure you, that besides the letter which ought to have been delivered to you at Boston (containing such testimonials of your merit and services as I thought a tribute justly due from me) and which was dispatched soon after it returned to me, I wrote you two or three times between that and the opening of the campaign in June.—In the month of July I wrote

you a long letter from New Windsor. About the first of Septr. I addressed you again—the last of the same month, after I had been favored with yr. affectionate letter by the Chevr. de la Luzerne, I wrote you a very long letter to go by Monsr. Gerard; and sometime in October I again wrote to you by Monsr. de la Colombe. Copys of all which, to the best of my recollection, have been duly forwarded; it is a little unfortunate then that out of the whole I should not be able to get one of them safe.

I have been thus particular, my dear friend, that in case there should be the least suspicion of my want of friendship or want of attention it may be totally removed; as it is my earnest wish to convince you, by every testimony that an affectionate regard can dictate, of my sincere attachment to your person and fortunes.

For ye copy of your letter to Congress, and the several pieces of intelligence, which you did me the favor to transmit, you will be pleased to accept my warmest thanks. Our eyes are now turned to Europe. The manœuvres of the field, long ere this, must have yielded to those of the cabinet; and I hope G. Britn. will be as much foiled in her management of the latter, as she has been in the former. Her having formed no alliances, nor been unable to contract for more foreign troops, exhibits interesting proofs of it, which are not a little enlivened by the dispositions of the People of Ireland, who feel the importance of a critical moment to shake off those badges of slavery, which they have so long worn.

Since my last, a Detachment, (if it can be called a detachment where the commander-in-chief of an army is,) consisting of the grenrs. and light Infantry, and some other chosen corps, amounting in the whole to between five and 6 thousand men, embarkd. for Georgia. The 26th of December they left Sandy hook, under convoy of 5 ships of the line, and several frigates, commanded by Admiral Arbuthnot. Generl. Clinton and Lord Cornwallis went with them. We have accts., that part of this fleet had arrived at Savannah (in Georgia), that it suffered very considerably in the stormy weather that followed their sailing, in which there is good reason to believe that most of their Horses were thrown overboard, and that some of their ships foundered. Indeed, we are not without reports, that many of the Transports were driven to the West Indies. How far these accts. are to be credited I shall not undertake to determine; but certain it is, the fleet has been much dispersed, and their operations considerably delayed, if not deranged, by the tempestuous weather they had to encounter during the whole month of January. The enemy, that they might bend their operations more forcibly to the southward, and at the same time leave New York and its dependencies sufficiently garrisoned, have withdrawn their troops from Rhode Island.

As the enemy's intentions of operating in the southern States began to unfold, I began to detach troops to their aid; accordingly in Novr. the North Carolina Brigade took up its march for Charleston,

and was followed abt. the middle of Decr. by the Troops of Virginia. But the extreme cold, the deep snows, and other impediments, have retarded the progress of their march very considerable. The oldest people now living in this country do not remember so hard a winter as the one we are now emerging from. In a word, the severity of the frost exceeded any thing of the kind that had ever been experienced in this climate before. I beg leave to make a tender of my best respects to Madm. de Lafayette, and to offer fresh assurances of being with sentiments of great and sincere friendship, my dear Marquis, your most obedient, &c.[1]

TO BARON DE KALB.

HEAD-QUARTERS, MORRIS TOWN,
21 March, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I have recd. your favr. of yesterday, enclosing a letter for General Greene, which I shall not deliver to him, as I know he has not at present the means of building the boats you mention. I would therefore recommend to you to put out the best of those, which you may find in the several Rivers, for the purpose of Guard-Boats. Upon referring to and reconsidering your former letter upon this subject, I am of opinion that the stations, which you then pointed out, will be dangerous, so far as they respect the distance between Elizabeth town and Amboy; the Sound there being so exceedingly narrow, that a Boat pushed suddenly

[1] Although Lafayette was in France when this letter was written, yet he did not receive it there, as he sailed for the United States before the end of March.

from the opposite shore in the night would more than probably take ours. Besides, I do not think we are to look for a descent in any considerable force from that quarter. The enemy has generally hitherto embarked either at Long Island, or upon the further side of Staten Island, and have come thro. the Kilns and across New Ark Bay, thereby avoiding all discovery from this shore, which they would be subject to anywhere between Elizabeth town and Amboy. New Ark Bay is, therefore, in my opinion, the proper and the safe place for your Guard-Boats to ply. It is of considerable extent, and a fleet of Boats may be discovered either by their working or by sight some time before their approach.

We have found on repeated experiments, that the inhabitants will not remove their stock untill the moment of danger; indeed at this season they have no places to send them where they can be supplied with food. I would therefore have you give as general information as in your power, that an incursion of the enemy may be expected, and recommend to the people to drive back their stock upon the first communication of an alarm. I do not think it probable, that the Enemy will put their designs, if they have any, into execution while our Commissioners are sitting at Amboy. I mention this as a matter of opinion only, and would not wish you to relax your Vigilance on that account. You will, no doubt, have the signals in the utmost state of preparation, and keep a small party stationed with the Alarm-Guns below Chatham. I am, &c.

TO LORD STIRLING.

HEAD QUARTERS, MORRIS TOWN,
22 March, 1780.

MY LORD,

Enclosed you will find an extract of a letter, which I recd. yesterday from Governor Livingston, with twelve Copies of the Act for recruiting the number of Men therein mentioned. You will be pleased, in consequence of the Governor's request, immediately to order as many officers as can possibly be spared from the Jersey line to go upon the recruiting service; selecting such as are best acquainted with that duty, and as are supposed to have influence in the respective Counties. The Words of the Act are confined to "able-bodied and effective men"; but I would wish your Lordship to draw a set of additional instructions for the recruiting officers, directing them not to enlist under the above description any deserters from the enemy; and letting them know in very explicit terms that the Recruits will, upon their arrival at Camp, be inspected by the Inspector-General, or one of the sub-Inspectors, and, if they shall be found ruptured, or any other ways unsound, too old or too young for the service, or in any manner unqualified for soldiers, that they shall be accountable, notwithstanding they may have been passed by the County Muster-Masters appointed by the act. I think this caution necessary, because it would not be a difficult matter to impose an improper man upon a gentleman in the Country not well acquainted with, or not very attentive to military matters.

You will be pleased further to direct the officers to

send forward their Recruits to Camp, in squads of five or six as they obtain them; for which purpose each officer should take with him a non-Commissioned officer, and one or two trusty men, to perform that duty. Well dressed and well looking men should be selected. Your Lordship will observe by the Act, that a Bounty of one thousand dollars is to be paid to each Recruit enlisting for the War, exclusive of *Continental Bounty and Emoluments;* but, that there may be no misconception or deception by the officers, or on the part of the men, you are clearly to express in the additional recruiting instructions, that the Continental Bounties and Emoluments only extend to Clothing, Land, and such other Benefits as may be hereafter allowed to soldiers serving during the war; in short, that one thousand dollars is the whole bounty in money which they are to expect. And the officer is to be informed, that the two hundred dollars' bounty for each recruit is to include, and to be considered by him as a compensation for his trouble and expenses.[1]

Officers of Militia are under the Act allowed to recruit Men; and it is therefore necessary that they

[1] "There is a point on which I would wish to obtain the sentiments and direction of Congress, as without them I am like to be under some embarrassment with respect to it. I find that the States of Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New Jersey, the only Three from which I have heard upon the subject of Levies (except New York, which has none to raise), have, for making up theirs, adopted the mode of voluntary enlistments for the War, under certain pecuniary bounties; viz.: Rhode Island 300, Connecticut 300, New Jersey 1000 Dollars, "in addition to and exclusive of the Continental bounty," as it is variously expressed; and the last two have requested officers to be sent from the army on the recruiting service. I wish to know whether there is any Continental pecuniary bounty *in such cases, and what it is*, (for I would beg leave to

should be apprized of the Bounty in Money, which is to be allowed. The best way, in my opinion, for communicating this is, for the Continental officers upon their arrival in the several Counties to show their instructions to the County Muster-Masters and County payMasters, and request them to communicate the substance of them to the officers of the militia. I shall be obliged by your Lordship's favoring me with a Copy of the instructions, which you deliver to the officers, that I may file them with my papers. I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.[1]

HEADQUARTERS, MORRISTOWN,
26 March, 1780.

SIR,

I beg leave to inform Congress that from the importance of the subject and the difficulties we have

observe, that I shall continue to give a bounty of Two Hundred Dollars to the old soldiers, who will reëngage for the war previous to, or on the expiration of their Enlistments, unless I am directed to the contrary, if any can be prevailed on to do it for the sum only ;) and, if there is a Continental bounty, whether it is to be exclusive of what the States give, and to be advanced by Warrants on the military chest, or inclusive and to be passed to the credit of the States respectively, for whose quota the Recruits are enlisted, as was directed on a similar occasion by the act of the 9 of March last. It will also be necessary for Congress to determine, in case a Continental bounty is allowed, whether it is to extend as well to men whose services will expire in the course of a few months, who may be reënlisted by the States by officers sent to the army for the purpose, which is part of the system meant to be pursued by some, as well as to those, who may be engaged in the State. I also wish to know, whether the officers, who may go on the Recruiting service, in consequence of requisitions from the different Governments, are to have a bounty, and what, from the United States ; or are to look only to their own States for a provision and allowance in the case. These points appear to me essential to be determined, and I would take the liberty to request, that Congress will be pleased to satisfy me with respect to them as soon as they shall judge it convenient."—*Washington to the President of Congress*, 28 March, 1780.

[1] "Our affairs seem to be verging so fast to a stagnation in every branch, even

experienced in our provision and forage supplies, I have been induced in the course of a few days past, with the assistance of the Quarter Master General and the Commissary Generals of provision and forage, to make an estimate of the quantity of each of these articles, which would be necessary under our circumstances for thirty thousand men for twelve months. From a view of our past expenditures and supposing our means of transportation will be nearly the same they have been, it appears that two hundred thousand barrels of flour and forty millions of pounds of meat would be requisite to be provided, and a much greater quantity of hay and grain forage,

provisions, that I have not only consented, but advised Genl. Greene, as I shall do the commissary when he arrives, to repair to Philadelphia, and endeavor to know with precision what is to be depended on in their respective departments. The new system adopted by Congress for conducting the business of these departments may have originated from two causes, necessity and choice; the first, from inability (for want of money) to proceed any further in the old track; the second, from a desire to change the old system on acct. of the Commission, it being thought, (and I fear with too much reason,) exceedingly expensive and disgustful to the People at large. Under these ideas and impressions I am embarrassed, and cautious of saying any thing on the subject, further than to give it as my opinion, that, whatever system is adopted, it should be made as perfect as the nature of the thing will admit of. That this is not the case in many instances with the present one is obvious, as must appear to you upon a comparative view of the plan, movements, and wants of an army. In some instances, if literally adhered to, ruin must follow."—*Washington to Philip Schuyler in Congress*, 22 March, 1780.

The radical changes, meditated in the civil departments of the army, were not believed to have been prompted by a friendly spirit to the Commander-in-chief. "I am very confident," said General Greene before he left camp, "that there is party business going on again, and, as Mifflin is connected with it, I doubt not its being a revival of the old scheme. The measure now taking is, to be prepared to take advantage of every opening, which the distresses of the army may introduce. I wish I may be mistaken, but measures strongly indicate such a disposition." Again, he wrote from Philadelphia: "General Schuyler and others consider it a plan of Mifflin's to injure your Excellency's operations. I am now fully convinced of the reality of what I suggested to you before I came away."—March 28th.

as will be seen by the enclosed estimate, than Congress have been pleased to require of the States, by their resolutions of the 25th of last month. I should have deemed a communication essential in the case of any specific requisition, which should have seemed too short in the supplies required, lest the States after providing for the quantities called for, might have permitted the remaining surplus of provisions to be exported, and from thence placed the subsistence of the army on too precarious a footing. In the present one, however, the communication appears the more essential as, besides the inconvenience suggested and admitting it should never happen, the act makes no certain provision for obtaining any supplies beyond those required by it, although they should prove deficient. With all deference I would take the liberty to observe, that it appears to me, we cannot be too secure and guarded with respect to our supplies of provision and forage, as a failure in either would involve the most distressing consequences and therefore that our requisitions should be full and ample in the first instance; and also, even where this is the case, that there should reside a power, either in the Commissary General, or in one or more persons appointed by Congress, or in the superintending agents to be nominated by the States, to provide for contingencies. Upon the present occasion this power seems to me indispensable, as the supplies requested by the resolution of the 25th of February, appear to be so materially deficient, and it may be absolutely necessary in many cases, both

for the sake of public economy and because the articles of supply may not be procurable elsewhere, or at least not in due time, or without great difficulty, to obtain large quantities of provision and forage in a State, after it has actually furnished the quota required of it in the general assessment. If this should not be allowable, the public service may and will certainly suffer; and yet under the present arrangement of the business in this State, which, as I am informed, has undertaken to furnish its quota agreeable to the requisition, there is no provision which authorizes its own superintendent or contractors to go farther than this, while the law prohibits the staff in the Continental line from purchasing any article of provision or forage on public account, under a severe penalty; which system may be adopted by others. With respect to the article of hay for instance, the quantity heretofore purchased in this State, and which was essential for the army, has been more than double what is apportioned on it by the act of the 25th of February; and should circumstances make as great an expenditure material in future, and the State should be capable of affording a supply, the public interest would certainly require that it should be procured, in preference to drawing it from another, supposing it could be done. The prosperity, and indeed the necessity, of the measure, holds equally with respect to other articles and to every State. I do not mean to convey an idea that it is not necessary in our present circumstances to make specific requisitions of supplies in these in-

stances, of the States; or that a system could be, or should be formed on any principle of apportionment, to oblige every one to furnish in this way more than its proportion; but only, that there should be a power somewhere, through which the public may avail themselves of the resources occasionally, of which each State may be capable. And indeed, as it may be unnecessary and impossible in many instances to use the supplies apportioned on particular States, from the local operations of the army, it seems to me that there should be occasional sales of the articles laid up, particularly of forage, whenever it shall appear from the circumstances of the war that they will not be wanted. * * * [1]

TO JOHN MATHEWS, IN CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 30 March, 1780.

SIR,

It would seem pretty evident from the enemy's inactivity, from which we derive so many advantages, that some very considerable derangement has happened in their affairs. Whether this arises from the want of horses, the loss of military stores, or an insufficiency in the article of small craft for the transportation of troops, or of proper ships to attempt the harbor, the result is the same to us; and I would flatter myself in the same hopes, that you have expressed on this head. You speak of the arrival of the Roebuck and transports from the southward at New York, but I have not had any information of

[1] Read in Congress March 29th. Referred to Sherman, Burke, Searle.

this kind, although my inquiries have been particular. The Russell from Savannah, and some provision vessels from Cork, have got in lately, but there are no other entries of consideration, which have taken place within these few weeks.

My intelligence for some time past has looked towards a considerable move on the part of the enemy; that boats have been collecting, and a number of boatmen engaged for a particular service. But the preparations were of such a nature, as would not admit of any decisive conclusions. Since this general intelligence, I have received some of a more pointed nature, that indicates another embarkation of about two thousand five hundred men for some distant part; and, under the circumstances of the enemy to the southward, it is most probably for that quarter. I expect to have the particulars in a day or two, when I shall have the honor of writing fully to Congress on the subject. With great regard, I am, Sir, etc.[1]

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD QUARTERS, MORRISTOWN,
31 March, 1780.

SIR,

I have the honor to inclose the report of the proceedings of the commissioners appointed to meet at Amboy, the 9th instant, for the purpose of settling a general cartel, by which Congress will perceive that

[1] "I am exceedingly pained to find that such a spirit for resigning seems to have taken place in the Massachusetts line. Not less than twelve officers, Captains, Ensigns and Majors, have left it in this way, since the 1st of January—two thirds of them in the course of a few days past; and I have now before me four or five applications more for the same purpose. I trust that this con-

the present attempt has been as unsuccessful as all the former, and from the same cause.

In January I was honored with a letter from the Minister of France, informing me of his having received advice from Europe, that the Court of London, on account of the difficulty they found in procuring men, had instructed their commander in chief here, to treat with us on a national footing, rather than fail to obtain a reinforcement to their army by the release of their prisoners in our hands. He added, that he had communicated this intelligence to Congress, and that Congress had requested him to transmit it to me, as a matter which ought materially to influence the measures we were about to take on the subject of an exchange.

Though I was strongly persuaded beforehand, that there was a mistake in his Excellency's information, and that the advantages to be reaped by the enemy from the proposed Exchange, would not be a sufficient inducement to a step of the nature it imported, which I took the liberty to signify to him, yet I thought it my duty to make the experiment, as well from motives of respect to the communication, as from the possibility of its being well founded. I therefore directed our commissioners to take every method to ascertain the Enemy's views on this head, and, if the British commissioners did not come with national powers, to decline doing anything with them

duct will be better considered of, and that there will be no more resignations. Besides the injury which must arise to the service from the practice, the officers who pursue it will illy requite the measures which it is said, the State have lately adopted for their relief."—*Washington to Major-General Howe*, 30 March, 1780.

in an official capacity ; but after satisfying themselves that nothing was to be effected on a larger scale, they were instructed to enter into private conversation on the terms of a particular exchange. Their letter No. 2. will shew what was done in consequence. Congress will perceive that their proposal was not accepted by the gentlemen on the other side, who insisted on the exchange being at all events extended to one half of the second division of the convention troops. This was a departure from the plan concerted between General Phillips and Cols. Magaw, Matthews, &c.

If Congress think that humanity requires or policy permits us to accede to the enemy's ultimatum, I shall be happy to execute their orders ; but it is a point of so much delicacy and importance, that I cannot forbear earnestly requesting I may be excused from deciding in it. On one hand, the acquisition of so many men will be of great moment to the enemy, if they meet with success to the southward ; on the other, I see not how we shall be able to maintain our officers in captivity, and the expence is no trifling consideration. I think it necessary to observe, that if the enemy's proposal should be accepted, it may be June before the prisoners are delivered— but perhaps it will be judged advisable to delay a determination 'till the probable issue of southern affairs is a little unfolded. I have the honor, &c.[1]

[1] Read in Congress, April 6th. Referred to Scott, Houston, and Ellery. The above committee discharged Oct. 13, 1780. Referred to Sullivan, Bland, and Mathews.

" This attempt for a general cartel and exchange has proved ineffectual, as every former one had done, founded on an objection to the powers given by Sir

TO PHILIP SCHUYLER, IN CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 31 March, 1780.

MY DEAR SIR,

I was about to fulfil the promise made to you in my last, of writing fully on the subject of your letter and other matters, when your obliging favor of the 22d came to hand. The hint contained in it was too seasonable and striking for me not to derive a lesson of use from it. I shall, therefore, as there is danger attending written communications of private sentimts., and my letters to the body of which you are a member will convey every occurrence and information of a public nature within my sphere of action, content myself with acknowledging and thanking you for the letters you may do me the favor to write.

I am much indebted to you for your communica-

Henry Clinton; and your Lordship will directly observe the great object of the American Congress is to mark some public act, in which General Washington may be concerned with Sir Henry Clinton in character of equality with Great Britain, on principles of nation against nation at war; and the positive declaration of the American commissioners on this matter fully evinces the fact, and that a general cartel can never possibly take place on any other ground, which it may be imagined will never be suffered by Great Britain. In a number of attempts to release the troops of convention, the matter has broken off under several descriptions. At one time the American Congress would not exchange the troops in corps; at another they were willing to exchange private soldiers to a certain number, but it was never understood what number or in what manner. Interested as I have been, it has led me to hold conversations with a number of American officers, proving to them that the troops of convention stood under a particular description, and that exchanging the officers without the men against American officers prisoners of war could not be considered as equal, the American officers going to an immediate activity of service, and the convention officers not doing so, as the regiments to which they belonged would still be in captivity; and, however eligible and convenient for the officers themselves, it would be of no advantage to the King's service."—*General Phillips to Lord George Germaine*, 25 March, 1780.

tions from the southward. I feel many anxious moments on account of the Carolinas, which are increased by the daily diminution of our force in this quarter, the little prospect of getting it augmented in time to answer any valuable purpose, and other obvious embarrassments. We are now beginning to experience the fatal consequences of the policy, which delayed calling upon the States for their quotas of men to a period when they ought to have been joined, that there might have been time for arranging and preparing them for the duties of the field. What to do for the southern States, without involving consequences equally alarming in this quarter, I know not. The enemy are certainly preparing for another embarkation (from present appearances about two thousand five hundred men); but, as I expect a more particular account of this matter by to-morrow, I shall defer writing to Congress till then. With the most sincere regard and affection, I am, &c.[1]

[1] In replying to this letter, General Schuyler related the following incident as having occurred in Congress.

"General Greene addressed Congress in a letter of the 3d instant, wishing for their sense of his general conduct in the quartermaster's department. A resolution was proposed, that Congress had full confidence in his integrity and ability, and requesting his future exertions. This brought on much debate. Amendments were moved, and the house got into heats, and an adjournment was deemed necessary to give the members time to cool. A member, more zealous for the general's reputation than prudent, observed that he was an officer in whom the commander-in-chief had the highest confidence, that he was the first of all the subordinate generals in point of military knowledge and ability, that in case of an accident happening to General Washington he would be the properest person to command the army, and *that General Washington thought so too.* Another observed, that he had a very high opinion of General Greene's military abilities, that he believed the Commander-in-chief had too, but that he believed no person on earth was authorized to say as much as those

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QRS., MORRISTOWN, 2 April, 1780.

SIR,

Since I had the Honor of addressing Your Excellency on the 28th ulto. I have received intelligence, which seems to place it beyond doubt, that the Enemy are about to make a further embarkation of Troops from New York, and the common opinion is, that they are going to reinforce Sir Henry Clinton. Lord Rawdon's brigade, said to consist of his own Regiment and of Brown's, Fanning's, and another corps, Two Hessian Regiments, the 42d and another British, estimated in the whole at 2,500 rank and file, are the Troops that will, according to report, make the embarkation. This intelligence, the probability there seems to be that the Enemy will endeavor to push their operations with vigor at the southward, the weak state of our force there, and unhappily in this quarter also, have laid me under great embarrassments with respect to the conduct that ought to be pursued. In considering the point, a choice of difficulties occurs to our view. The southern States, it is to be apprehended, may require much support ; and, while we attempt to afford it from hence, we run a serious risk in this quarter, from the facility with which the Enemy, by the help of their fleet, can unite their force at any point where they find us weak. Congress will the better conceive in how deli-

words implied. I mention this, that your Excellency may guard against any misapprehension, which this may occasion with your officers. General Greene will inform you who delivered the imprudent speech."—April 5th.

cate a situation we stand, when I inform them, that our whole operating force present on this and on the other side of the North River amounts to only Ten Thousand four Hundred rank and file, of which about Two Thousand Eight Hundred will have completed their term of service by the last of May (Two thirds by the end of this month), while the Enemy's regular force at New York and its dependencies must amount, upon a moderate calculation, to about Eleven Thousand rank and file. I enclose Congress a list of the corps at New York, after the Detachment which sailed with Sir Henry Clinton, taken from *Gaine's Register* for the present year. Our situation too is the more critical, from the impossibility of concentrating our force, as well for want of the means of taking the Field, as from the early period of the season.

The want also of a magazine of flour and salt provision at West Point renders it the more necessary, that our covering force should be respectable; as, from this unlucky circumstance, which could not be prevented, the post in case of investiture might be exposed to great risk, at least if its relief depended much on a force to be collected. * * * But, notwithstanding these objections, perhaps something should be hazarded here, relying on the internal strength of the Country, for the purpose of giving further succor to the southern States, where there is not the same dependence. I shall therefore put the Maryland line, and the Delaware Regiment, which acts with it, under marching orders immediately, and have directed pro-

vision to be made for transporting them as far as Philadelphia; and propose that their march, if practicable, should commence on the sailing of the Detachment from New York. But before the measure is carried into execution, I shall be happy to know the sense of Congress on its expediency. The consequences may be very important either way, and I wish to have their instructions for my government.

In case the detachment is to march, its ulterior proceedings and rout from Philadelphia will depend on the orders, which Congress, or the Honorable the Board of War by their directions, shall give; for it is impossible for me, under our circumstances, to give directions upon this occasion. The Qr. Master and Commissary General are both in Philadelphia, and will exert themselves, I am persuaded, to carry into execution any plan for the transportation and accommodation of the troops, that may be judged most eligible, as far as it may be in their power. Baron de Kalb, who is now at the head of the Maryland division, will command the Detachment in case it proceeds, and will set out to-morrow or the next day for Philadelphia, to assist and expedite the arrangements for its future movements. If the Troops could embark without delay at the Head of Elk, and arrive safe in James River, it would not only be a great ease to them, but it would expedite their arrival at the Southward, and prevent many desertions, which will probably happen if they march thro' their State. But how far this mode of proceeding may be eligible, I will not pretend to determine; as the

enemy, in case they should be advised of it, which every precaution of secrecy would be necessary to prevent, might by sending armed Vessels into the Bay attempt to intercept them in their passage.

Major Lee's corps is under marching orders for the southward, of which I have advised the Honorable the Board of War on the 30th ; and the Commanding officer is directed to proceed with it, as soon as he adjusts with them the proper arrangements.[1] I enclose Your Excellency an Extract from Robertson's New York *American Gazette* of the 28th of last month. The intelligence, if true, is very important and interesting. I have the honor to be, &c.[2]

TO BARON STEUBEN.

MORRISTOWN, 2 April, 1780.

MY DEAR BARON,

I duly received your letter of the 15th of March, which hurry of business has prevented my acknowledging sooner. Last night brought me your favor of the 2d.

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[1] "You will be pleased, upon the receipt of this, to take the most expeditious measures for putting the whole Corps, both Horse and Foot, in readiness to march. If you move, your destination will be South Carolina. The Horse will go the whole way by land ; the foot will go down the Chesapeake Bay by Water, and meet the Horse at Petersburg. As soon as you have given the necessary orders at Burlington, you had best repair to Philada., and apply to the Board of War, to whom I have written on the subject, for the Articles wanting to equip the Corps for so long a march. Be pleased to acknowledge this. Send your answer to the Qr. M. at Trenton, who will forward it to me."—*Washington to the officer commanding Major Henry Lee's corps*, 30 March, 1780.

[2] Read in Congress April 5th. Referred to the Board of War.

The propositions made by you to Congress for the arrangement of the army this campaign appear to me, upon the whole, best adapted to our circumstances, and especially since so much of the season has elapsed without entering upon it. I am glad the proposed incorporation has been suspended. I doubt, however, the practicability at this time of augmenting the cavalry or recruiting the additionals, from the circumstance you mentioned, the extreme distress of the treasury, which seems to be totally exhausted, and without sufficient resources for the current demands of the service. The present crisis is indeed perplexing beyond description, and it is infinitely difficult to devise a remedy.

When I approve your plan for the additional regiments, it is with one condition; that Congress can find means to provide for the officers, so as to put them upon an equal footing with the other parts of the army. If this cannot be done, they cannot continue in the service. I have incessant applications to this effect, and have just written again to Congress on the subject. If the situation of the officers cannot be made more tolerable, it will be preferable to dissolve those corps, incorporate the men with the State lines, and let the officers retire to be entitled to pay, subsistence, and the emoluments decreed at the end of the war. This will be a very bad expedient, if it can be avoided; but it is better than to leave the officers in such a state, that they must be miserable while they stay in the army; obliged in a little time, the greatest part of them, to quit, while the corps for

want of care will rapidly decline, and a number of good men be lost to the service.[1]

Your anxiety on the score of southern affairs cannot exceed mine. The measure of collecting the whole force for the defence of Charlestown ought no doubt to have been well considered before it was determined. It is putting much to the hazard; but at this distance we can form a very imperfect judgment of its propriety or necessity. I have the greatest reliance on General Lincoln's prudence; but I cannot forbear dreading the event. Ill as we can afford a diminution of our force here, and notwithstanding the danger we run from the facility with which the

[1] "General Heath, who is appointed by the State of Massachusetts to superintend the recruiting service, writes me that he shall endeavor to detain three commd. and one non-commissioned officer of each Regt., who are already in the State on furlough, to go out recruiting, and to march the recruits, deserters who may be apprehended, and furloughed men, from the places of rendezvous to West Point. But as he is not certain of finding the number required, he wishes you to send the deficiency, should there be any, from the line. This you will be pleased to do, if the State of the Regiments will admit of it. Those officers, who have not been indulged with furloughs should be preferred, as they will have an opportunity of visiting their families and friends, and looking into their private affairs at the same time. Capt. Webb, the Bearer of this, who is under the necessity of resigning, if he cannot obtain leave of absence, would be content with going home upon these terms. He represents the situation of his family in such a manner, that I wish him to be indulged, if possible, at any rate.

"That there may be no misapprehension, you will be pleased to acquaint the officers before they go out upon the recruiting service, that I know of no continental Bounty or allowance to reimburse their Expenses, or to compensate their trouble. The State, I have been informed, have made some provision, but I do not know exactly what it is. I have been full upon this point, lest the officers should hereafter complain, that they had gone out in obedience to orders, and that the State allowance was not adequate to their necessary expenditures. They must also be informed, that the Recruits, who may be obtained, will be for the benefit of the line at large, and not for any particular corps."—*Washington to Major-General Howe*, 13 April, 1780.

enemy can concenter their force at our weak points, besides other inconveniences, I have recommended it to Congress to detach the Maryland division to reinforce the southern States. Though this detachment cannot in all probability arrive in season to be of any service to Charles Town, it may assist to arrest the progress of the enemy and save the Carolinas.[1]

My sentiments concerning public affairs correspond too much with yours. The prospect, my Dear Baron, is gloomy, and the storm threatens. Not to have the anxieties you express, at the present juncture, would be not to feel that zeal and interest in our cause, by which all your whole conduct shows you to be actuated. But I hope we shall extricate ourselves, and bring every thing to a prosperous issue. I have been so inured to difficulties in the course of this contest, that I have learned to look upon them with more tranquillity than formerly. Those, which now present themselves, no doubt require vigorous exertions to overcome them, and I am [far] from despairing of doing it. Though I shall be happy to have the honor of seeing the Minister in Camp, as soon as it may be convenient to him, your reasons for persuad-

[1] "I have, in consequence of the opinion of the last Council of War, left it with Congress finally to determine upon the march of the Maryland division to the Southward. That no time may be lost in the transportation of the troops, should Congress agree in sentiment with the Council, I am to desire you to proceed immediately to Phila., and, if you find upon your arrival there, that the troops are to move, concert with the Board of War the Commissary and Quarter-Master General the necessary arrangements for their provision and accommodation. But should it be determined, that the march of the Body of Men alluded to is at this time either inexpedient or unnecessary, you will be pleased, after compleating your private business, to return to your command in the army."—*Washington to Baron de Kalb*, 4 April, 1780.

ing him to defer his journey awhile were good. I wish it were in my power to save him the trouble of the journey by paying him my respects in Philadelphia; but our present military situation, joined to other reasons, will not permit me to have that honor. I am very sensible, my Dear Baron, to the obliging assurances of your regard, and I entreat you to believe there is a perfect reciprocity of sentiments, and that I am, with great consideration and the truest esteem, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, MORRIS TOWN,
3 April, 1780.

SIR,

I have frequently had the honor to address Congress on the subject of those Corps, which are unconnected with the lines of particular States. Satisfied of the numerous perplexities under which they labor, it is with pain and reluctance I trouble them with repeated representations of the same nature; but in the present case it is so indispensable something should be done, that I cannot forbear the repetition, however disagreeable. The situation of the officers of these Corps is absolutely insupportable. Unless something effectual can be done to make it more comfortable, it is impossible they can remain in the service. The resolution of Congress for making them part of the State Quotas has rather been a disadvantage than an advantage. It has had a very partial operation, and the benefit resulting to a few has only served to establish a contrast that embitters the sufferings of

the rest. Nothing can be conceived more chagrining, than for an officer to see himself destitute of every necessary, while another, not only in the service of the same Government, engaged in defending the same cause, but even in the same regiment, and sometimes standing by his side in the same company, is decently if not amply provided. Enthusiasm alone can support him in a moment's perseverance; but even this principle must give way to a necessity so continued and so hopeless. Dayly applications are made to me to know whether there is a prospect of relief, always accompanied with a declaration, that it is impossible any longer to endure the extremities to which they are driven.

I entreat the attention of Congress to this matter. If there is no way to make provision for the officers, it would be better to dissolve the corps, incorporate the men with the regiments belonging to the State lines, and let the officers retire with pay and subsistence, and such other emoluments as may be enjoyed by others after the war. In their present state, they are actually suffering every inconvenience, in fruitless expectations of a remedy that will perhaps never come; those who have less resource otherwise, less zeal, or less fortitude, are resigning from day to day. A relaxation of care in the interior of the regiments must be a necessary consequence; and many valuable men will be gradually lost to the service, who might be saved. It is much better, therefore, that the expedient suggested should be adopted, than that things should remain as now circumstanced. But if it were

possible to obviate the necessity for it, it were much to be wished, as it would preserve many of our best officers to the army, who would with infinite reluctance quit the field, while the defence of their country called for their services.

Before I conclude, I think it my duty to touch upon the general situation of the army at this juncture. It is absolutely necessary Congress should be apprized of it, for it is difficult to forsee what may be the result; and, as very serious consequences are to be apprehended, I should not be justified in preserving silence. There never has been a stage of the war, in which the dissatisfaction has been so general or alarming. It has lately, in particular instances, worn features of a very dangerous complexion. A variety of causes has contributed to this; The diversity in the terms of enlistments, the inequality of the rewards given for entering into the service, but still more the disparity in the provision made by the several States for their respective Troops. The system of State supplies, however in the commencement dictated by necessity, has proved in its operation pernicious beyond description. An army must be raised, paid, subsisted, and regulated upon an equal and uniform principle, or the confusions and discontents are endless. Little less than the dissolution of the army would have been long since the consequence of a different plan, had it not been for a spirit of patriotic virtue, both in officers and men, of which there are few examples, seconded by the unremitting pains that have been taken to compose and reconcile

them to their situation. But these will not be able to hold out much longer against the influence of causes constantly operating, and every day with some new aggravation.

Some States, from their internal ability and local advantages, furnish their Troops pretty amply, not only with cloathing, but with many little comforts and conveniences; others supply them with some necessaries, but on a more contracted scale; while others have it in their power to do little or nothing at all. The officers and men in the routine of duty mix dayly and compare circumstances. Those, who fare worse than others, of course are dissatisfied, and have their resentment excited, not only against their own State, but against the Confederacy. They become disgusted with a service that makes such injurious distinctions. No arguments can persuade an officer it is justice he should be obliged to pay £— a yard for cloth, and other things in proportion, while another is furnished at part of the price. The officers resign, and we have now scarcely a sufficient number left to take care even of the fragments of corps which remain. The men have not this resource. They murmur, brood over their discontents, and have lately shown a disposition to enter into seditious combinations.

A new scene is now opening, which I fear will be productive of more troublesome effects, than any thing that has hitherto taken place. Some of the States have adopted the measure of making good the depreciation of the money to their Troops, as well for

the past as for the future. If this does not become general, it is so striking a point, that the consequences must be unspeakably mischievous. I enter not into the propriety of this measure in the view of finance, but confine myself to its operation upon the army. Neither do I mean to insinuate, that the liberality of particular States has been carried to a blamable length. The evil I mean to point out is the inequality of the different provisions, and this is inherent in the present system. It were devoutly to be wished, a plan could be devised by which every thing relating to the army could be conducted on a general principle, under the direction of Congress. This alone can give harmony and consistence to our military establishment, and I am persuaded it will be infinitely conducive to public economy. I hope I shall not be thought to have exceeded my duty in the unreserved manner in which I have exhibited our situation.[1] Congress, I flatter myself, will have the

[1] In consequence of this letter, a committee of three persons was appointed by Congress, invested with very extensive powers, and instructed to proceed to head-quarters, and, in conjunction with the Commander-in-chief, to effect such reforms and changes in all the departments of the army as its present condition required. They were authorized, with the advice of General Washington, "to reduce, incorporate, or unite to State lines, the several additional corps"; to inquire into and regulate the clothier's, quartermaster's, commissary's, and medical departments; to visit the different posts and see that such regulations as they should adopt were carried into execution; "to abolish unnecessary posts, to erect others, to discharge useless officers, to stop rations improperly issued, and to exercise every power requisite to effect a reformation of abuses, and the general arrangement of those departments, which were in any wise committed to their charge"; and to inform Congress from time to time of the measures they had taken. The committee was chosen by ballot, and consisted of Schuyler, Mathews, and Peabody.—*Journals*, April 6th, 12th, 13th.

M. de la Luzerne communicated to Count Vergennes the following particulars respecting the proceedings of Congress on this subject:

goodness to believe, that I have no other motives than a zeal for the public service, a desire to give them every necessary information, and an apprehension for the consequences of the evils we now experience. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO MAJOR-GENERAL LINCOLN.

HEAD-QUARTERS, MORRIS TOWN,
15 April, 1780.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have successively received your several letters of the 23d and 28th of January, 12th, 14th and 23d of February, almost all of which were come to hand when I wrote you by General Duportail, but by accident were not acknowledged. As far as it is possible for me, at this distance and with a very inconsiderable knowledge of the country, to judge, your reasonings on the best plan for an expedition against Augustine appear to me well founded. But unfortunately for us, from every present aspect, we shall find ample employment in defending ourselves, without meditating

"A committee of three was proposed. Warm debates ensued. It was said, that this would be putting too much power in a few hands, and especially in those of the Commander-in-chief; that his influence was already too great; that even his virtues afforded motives for alarm; that the enthusiasm of the army, joined to the kind of dictatorship already confided to him, put Congress and the United States at his mercy; that it was not expedient to expose a man of the highest virtues to such temptations. It was then proposed, that the committee should consist of one member from each State. This proposition failed, on the ground that the operations of so large a number would be subject to all the delays, which had been complained of in Congress. After a long and animated debate, the motion for a committee of three prevailed."—*MS. Letter*, April 16th.

[1] Read in Congress April 5th.

conquests. Your latter letter announces the arrival and progress of Sir Henry Clinton to Stono. It is of the greatest importance that he met with the disasters which attended his voyage, though they were much smaller than was expected. This, no doubt, is the cause of his delay, and, I sincerely hope, will give you time to receive the necessary succors, and put your self in an effectual posture of defence.

In my letter by General Duportail I informed you that my advices from New York indicated a further embarkation, supposed to be destined for the southward. This has actually taken place, and has been for some time on the point of sailing, though it is not yet ascertained that they have sailed. I have had several accounts of the corps composing the detachment, but as they materially differ from each other, I cannot rely sufficiently upon either to transmit it. From every information, the total number will be from 2,000 to 2,500 men, commanded by Lord Rawdon as brigadier. I do not learn that there are any cavalry or draught-horses, more than about fifteen dragoons, attached to Simcoe's corps. If this embarkation should be designed as a reinforcement to General Clinton, and he should suspend his operations 'till its arrival, as is probable, so much time will be exhausted that he will be thrown into the hot season, a circumstance not a little unfavorable to his success. You will easily conceive the degree of our solicitude here for the fate of Charles Town and its garrison. My apprehensions, after all, are principally for the harbor. If this is secured, the operations

against you must become critical and arduous. But whatever may be the event, of this we are assured, that no exertion, prudence, or perseverance on your part will be wanting to defeat the attempts of the enemy. May the issue be equally conducive to your personal glory and to the advantage of these States.

In consequence of the detachment the enemy are now making, it has been determined to march the Maryland division of about 2000 men to your assistance; but our situation here will not permit it to move before it is certain the enemy's detachment has sailed.[1] Baron de Kalb will command this division. This reinforcement in all probability will be too late to have any influence upon the fate of Charles Town; but, if that should fall, it may serve to check the progress of the British troops, and prevent their geting entire possession of the State. If they succeed against Charles Town, there is much reason to believe the southern States will become the principal theatre of the war.

I enclose you sundry resolutions of Congress of the 25th of February for raising specific supplies of provisions and forage on the different States, in which you will find the quantities apportioned on North and South Carolina. Congress have left it with me to determine the places of deposit; but my remoteness from those two States, and the imperfect knowledge I have of their position and circumstances, disqualify me from extending my arrangements to them. These

[1] "How they will get on for want of provisions, transportation, &ca., Heaven alone can tell—I cannot,"—*Washington to Major-General Howe*, 13 April, 1780.

will be much better made by you, and I must request you will as speedily as possible carry into execution that part of the resolutions, which depends on me. I have written to the governors of the two States, referring them to you for information on this head, which you will no doubt give without loss of time. I have written to the governor of Virginia, pressing the supplying of the troops of that State with cloathing, agreeable to your request. I am very truly and affectionately, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD QUARTERS, MORRISTOWN,
17 April, 1780.

SIR,

I have duly received your Excellency's despatches of the 6th and 9th of April. The Maryland division marched this morning, with the first regiment of Artillery and eight field-pieces, besides those attached to the Brigades, which will be useful at any rate, and essential, if an accident should happen to Charles Town. The want of waggons has unavoidably retarded the march of the troops till this time.

I have attentively considered the application from the State of Massachusetts, on the subject of an expedition against the Enemy at Penobscot. It appears to be of great importance in several points of view, that they should be dislodged; but, circumstanced as we are, I do not see how the attempt can be made with any prospect of success. A naval coöperation seems to be absolutely necessary, and for this we do not possess the means.

We have no fleet, and the Enemy have a respectable one on the coast, which they can at any time employ to frustrate our measures. From all accounts, the Posts at Penobscot are strongly situated, and susceptible of being made more formidable by additional fortifications, which it is to be presumed has not been neglected. To attempt a *coup de main* with a tolerable certainty of success would require a considerable force, and of other troops than militia, which can by no means be spared. To operate by a siege, with cannon and the necessary apparatus, would be an affair of length. The operating force, I am informed, must depend on supplies of every kind by water. This communication would be liable to be interrupted at the pleasure of the Enemy, and the situation of the troops would be alarmingly precarious. A reinforcement might at any time be sent from Halifax and New York to raise the siege; our troops would perhaps themselves escape with difficulty, no doubt with disgrace and with the loss of their cannon and stores. But, were there no other obstacles in the way, the total deficiency of money and magazines seems alone to be insurmountable. With respect to both of these we seem to be arrived at so desperate an extremity, that every arrangement and operation is at a stand, and, without speedy relief, inevitable ruin must ensue.

These objections to the expedition obviously present themselves in the present posture of our affairs, though I confess I have not a sufficient knowledge of the Country in question to form a very accurate judgment. Could we obtain an effectual naval co-

operation, this and many other things might be undertaken, which without it are impracticable. Indeed, considering the position of these States, a Fleet is essential to our system of defence; and that we have not hitherto suffered more than we have for want of it, is to be ascribed to the feeble and injudicious manner in which the enemy have applied the means in their hands during this War. The plan they are now preparing, of attacking points remote from each other, will make us feel the disadvantage in a striking manner, and may be fatal, if our allies are not able to afford us naval succor. In all respects it is more necessary now than it ever was. * * *

I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO COLONEL JOHN LAURENS, AT CHARLESTON.

MORRISTOWN, 26 April, 1780.

MY DEAR LAURENS,

I sincerely lament that your prospects are not better than they are. The impracticability of defending the bar, I fear, amounts to the loss of the town and garrison. At this distance it is difficult to judge for you, and I have the greatest confidence in General Lincoln's prudence; but it really appears to me, that the propriety of attempting to defend the town depended on the probability of defending the bar, and that, when this ceased, the attempt ought to have been relinquished. In this, however, I suspend a definitive judgment, and wish you to consider what I

[1] Read in Congress, April 20th.

say as confidential. Since your last to me, I have received a letter from General Lincoln, in which he informs me, that the enemy had got a sixty-four-gun ship with a number of other vessels over the bar, and that it had been determined to abandon the project of disputing the passage by Sullivan's Island, and to draw up the frigates to the town and take out their cannon. This brings your affairs nearer to a dangerous crisis, and increases my apprehensions.[1]

You will have learned from General Lincoln, that a second detachment sailed from New York on the 7th instant, supposed to be destined to reinforce Sir Henry Clinton. I have not yet ascertained all the particular corps, but know that the forty-second, the Irish volunteers, Queen's rangers, and some foreign troops are of the number, and have every reason to believe the total number is from two thousand to two thousand five hundred. They appeared a few days since off the Chesapeake Bay, but immediately continued their voyage. I have just received an account of the arrival of forty-one transports at New York from South Carolina, and that there were strong symptoms of another embarkation. This circumstance is to me not of easy explanation. I should imagine that Sir Henry Clinton's present force was equal to his object, and that he would not require more. The garrison of New York and its dependen-

[1] "The loss of the bar is a very serious loss—I hope it may not be a fatal one. This consolation, however, offers itself, that the honor of our arms is safe in your hands, and that if you must fall, you will not fall without a vigorous struggle."—*Washington to Major-General Lincoln*, 26 April, 1780.

cies at this time cannot much exceed eight thousand men, a number barely sufficient for its defence, and not with propriety admitting a diminution. Perhaps, however, counting upon our weakness the enemy may determine to hazard something here, the more effectually to secure conquest to the southward; or perhaps they may only intend to detach a force for a temporary diversion in Virginia or North Carolina, to return afterwards to New York. I expect more certain advice to-day, and should it confirm the first, any demonstrations it may be in our power to make, to retard or prevent the embarkation, shall be put in practice; but unfortunately we have very little in our power.

In both your letters you express a wish, that I should come to the southward. Though I cannot flatter myself with the advantages you look for from such a step, yet, if it were proposed by Congress, I confess to you that I should not dislike the journey, did our affairs in this quarter permit it; but unluckily the great departments of the army are now in total confusion, and Congress have just appointed a committee in conjunction with me, to new model and rectify them. Till this is done, I could not leave this army. And, were not this obstacle in the way, you will easily conceive that I must have many scruples, which forbid me to let the measure in question originate with me. But all this for your private ear. Be assured, my dear Laurens, that I am extremely sensible to the expressions of your attachment, and that I feel all for your present situation, which the

warmest friendship can dictate. I am confident you will do your duty, and in doing it you must run great hazards. May success attend you, and restore you with fresh laurels to your friends, to your country, and to me. I am, &c.

TO PRESIDENT REED.

HEAD QUARTERS, MORRISTOWN,
April 28, 1780.

SIR,

I have had the honor to receive Your Excellency's Letter of the 18th Instant. I am sorry to find the Council are apprehensive that difficulties will attend the collecting of the supplies required of the State, by the Resolution of Congress of the 25th of February; but I cannot see that it is in my power to prevent them in any degree. Your Excellency and the Council will perceive on recurring to the proceedings, that all I could do on the occasion was to appoint such places of deposit in each State for the Articles they were to furnish respectively as I should judge convenient, or in other words accommodated to the public service. This I have endeavored to do in the best manner I was able, from a full consideration of all circumstances, as well with respect to Pennsylvania as to every other State, and I am happy in the persuasion that Your Excellency and the Council will believe it has been the case. It was owing I imagine to the pressing necessity of the case and the very unhappy state of our public finance, that this mode of

obtaining supplies was adopted; and it appears evidently to me to be the spirit and the expectation of the system, founded I suppose in the same unhappy necessity which led to the requisition for specific supplies, that each State should transport the Articles they are to furnish, to the places appointed within them as Deposits.

With respect to the Representation of the Field Officers of the Pennsylvania line, which Your Excellency has been pleased to transmit me,—it leads without doubt to consequences of an important and interesting nature. The Objects in general to which it goes are of such magnitude and delicacy, that I cannot undertake, either to decide or to give an opinion upon them. It is, however, certainly to be wished and the general interest requires it, that the Regiments which the public think proper to keep up, should be made more respectable than they are in many instances at present. How this is to be effected is with the particular States to determine. But Two modes occur to me,—either to do it by voluntary inlistment or by Drafting. Most of the States from which I have heard, have in consequence of the late requisition of Congress adopted the former, and it is said the business is attended with some success; but should this not be the case, the States must, if they mean to continue the War, have recourse to the other expedient. I am also persuaded that there is too much countenance given to Deserters, and if proper Laws could be devised and effectually executed against those that do it, that our force would be much

more respectable than it is at present. There have been many instances where Deserters apprehended by Officers, have been rescued by the people—and but very few where the Officers have received their aid and support. As to a reduction and incorporation of the Regiments, it must depend on Congress, and be the effect probably of some general system of arrangement. I have expected for some days past a Committee at Camp, whose powers possibly may extend to this point. If they do the measure is thought eligible and adopted, it will I suppose of course comprehend a plan of provision for the Officers who are reduced. The wishes of the Legislature with respect to the Independent Companies of Artillery, will also be without doubt in such case attended to and the incorporation made if it can be done.

With respect to the depreciation of the money and making it up to the Officers and Soldiers, it were to be wished that it could be the result of some common general system that all might stand upon an equal footing. But whether this will or can be the case, I cannot pretend to say. Most if not the whole of the New England States as I have understood, have acted upon the matter and provided for it in the instance of their Troops; but I do not know the principles on which they have conducted the business. This being the case with respect to them those of the other States who have the same pretentions, will naturally expect relief from some quarter.

It is certain, the depreciation of the money has operated with singular severity against the Army, as

their pay has not been increased and gives them an equitable claim to a compensation ; but it may be a matter of difficulty to say how the compensation should be made. If it is to be in money—the payment at a future day would be attended with less injury to the Public and more advantage to those receiving it, as our finances would then be in a better train and of course the money more valuable ; whereas at this time it would require a very extraordinary emission and add to the Public embarrassments while it afforded but little or no relief to the parties.

I have, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HOWE.

Hd. Qrs. Morristown, 28 April, 1780.

Dr. Sir,

Col. Hay delivered me your letter of the 18th of April.

It is lamentable that we should be obliged to experience such distresses as we do everywhere. Those we feel here are not inferior to yours ; we are constantly on point of starving for want of provision and forage. A deficiency of money is the cause, and a cause for which the present situation of affairs renders it infinitely difficult to provide a remedy. We are at a most delicate crisis. I dread with you the consequences.

We are informed there is an arrival of 47 transports from South Carolina at New York, and that there are appearances of a further embarkation. It may

be of use to make demonstrations of a movement on our part. I should be glad, so far as it can be done without interfering with the necessary operations, and without incurring expense, that you would set on foot a collection of boats on the river, and have them inspected and some little repairs made. Some time since you were directed at your own instance to have all the fascines and gabions, which had been provided in expectation of Count d'Estaing last fall, deposited within the works. If this has not been effected, you will be pleased to have it done. They may possibly be of future utility, and the act of removing them will contribute to our present purpose. A number were provided below Stony Point where the Virginia troops lay. You will not forget to remove these also to a place of security.

General Duportail being gone to the Southward, it is necessary that Col. Gouvion should repair to this army. If there are any previous arrangements, you wish him to make, you will be pleased to direct him to make them, and to set out for Head-Quarters as speedily as he can. It has been represented to me, that cattle coming on for this army have been stopped by some of your Commissaries for the use of the Garrison. As the Purchasing Commissary makes a distribution in the first instance, and always takes care to send a proportion to the posts under your command, any interference of this kind is irregular and improper. You will be pleased to give orders to prevent it in future. Our wants here are so extreme, that the supplies intended for this part of the army

cannot be diverted to any other without risking the most serious consequences.

The state of our arsenals makes the greatest care and œconomy indispensable. I wish you to pay a pointed attention, that the men whose times of service expire do not, at leaving the army, carry away the public arms with them. Such, who may have brought arms of their own with them, for which they have not been paid, and which have been exchanged for better, they must as far as may be practicable return those they now have and receive their own. You will make the commandants of battalions particularly responsible for carrying this into execution. The Maryland division being gone to the Southward, all the men belonging to it in the Hospitals at Albany are directed to be sent to Fish Kill. When arrived there, you will take measures to have them and those already at Fish Kill forwarded to this place. Should they want any little necessaries of shoes, &c., you will have them supplied. I am, with great regard, &c.

TO THE REVEREND DOCTOR WILLIAM GORDON.

HEAD QUARTERS, MORRISTOWN,
3 May, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I received some time ago your Letter of the 29th of February and 1st of March by Colo. Henley. From a multiplicity of important pressing business which I have had on hand, I was prevented from communicating it to Colo. Hamilton till yesterday.

It was then put into his hands, as You will perceive by the Inclosure No. 1 & 2, a Copy of my Letter to him upon the occasion and his answer. While I must ascribe it to your politeness, I regret that the consideration of Colo. Hamilton's being a member of my family should have been a motive for bringing so disagreeable a business before me. The Gentlemen attached to me are upon the same footing with the other officers of the Army, and equally responsible for their conduct. You will pursue such a mode in the present case as you deem most effectual, but if you should think proper to exhibit any charge against Colo. Hamilton cognizable by a military tribunal, you have only to signify your wish and the time you will be able to produce your witnesses, and I shall proceed in it accordingly.[1]

As far as the temper and disposition of the several Courts of Europe are developed, and known to us, the assisting of G. Britain does not appear to be an object with them; and yet, if we are to form a judgment from report, and indeed from appearances, the King and his Ministers are firmly resolved to prosecute the War in America with unabating rigor—depending, it is to be presumed, upon the wretched state of our money, more than they do on the expectation of foreign aid.

If the plan of finance adopted by Congress, should receive that general support which the exigency of the times loudly calls for, and which I hope and trust it will not fail to do, from every well wisher to his

[1] See "Writings of Alexander Hamilton" (Lodge's edition), vol. vii., pp. 570, 571, 586.

Country, I believe the foundation on which the enemy have superstructed their plans will give way, and leave the contrivers and authors of the present mischief to that punishment which an injured and deceived people are ready to inflict, and which the populace of England as well as Ireland seem now to be preparing. For this purpose a spirit is gone forth and is now manifesting itself, I hope, under ye appo. of Association Committees &c. That it may also be the harbinger of Peace to this distressed Country, I most fervently wish.[1]

For your good wishes, you will please to accept my sincere thanks. My best respects, in which Mrs. Washington joins, are presented to Mrs. Gordon—and compliments to all enquiring friends. I am, &c.[2]

[1] The impressions of the British ministry, respecting the condition of things in America, may be learned from the following extract: "All the private letters from the rebel countries are filled with representations of the general distress and sufferings of the people, the discontents of the troops, and the universal wish for peace. The middle provinces are said to be so disinclined to support the Congress, that no recruits are to be had, and the militia will not submit to be drafted. Their only resort for continuing the war seemed to be a foreign aid, which, however, has not yet been sent to them; and therefore I flatter myself you will have met but little interruption in your progress northward after the reduction of Charleston, and that you will have sufficient time to execute your plan in the Chesapeake, or at least to establish yourself there beyond the power of any force, which can be brought to dislodge you."—*MS. Letter from Lord George Germaine to General Clinton*, May 3d.

[2] "The polite terms in which you mention the attention, which my respectful attachment for you dictated during your stay in camp, add to the obligation I feel for the honor of your visit. I was happy in that opportunity of giving you new proofs of my sentiments, and I entreat you to afford me others as frequently as possible. As the minister of a prince, to whom America owes so much, you have every title to my respect; and, permit me to add, your personal qualities give you a claim, which my heart cheerfully acknowledges, to all my esteem and all my regard.

"I beg you to accept my thanks for your intention to represent the army in so favorable a light, as will recommend it to the approbation of his Most

TO JAMES DUANE.

MORRISTOWN, 13 May, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

Your favors of the 4th and 9th came safe to hand. I thank you very sincerely for the several articles of Intelligence contained in them; and shall be happy, at all times, to hear from you when any thing occurs worthy of the moments which must be spent in the communication.

My hearty wishes attend your endeavors to accomplish the Confederation. It is certainly a most desirable event for us, and a much dreaded one by the enemy.

The spirit which seems to have gone forth in England, must methinks, exceedingly embarras the measures of Administration, and give proportionate aid to our cause. This, or some other accounts by the last Packet, has, undoubtedly, produced dejected countenances in New York. The advice boat that brought them not being able to proceed with the despatches for Sir Henry Clinton, in the instant of her arrival, another was ordered and sailed immediately for Charles Town with them. The Tories you may depend on it are much alarm'd.

Christian Majesty; an honor as flattering as it will be precious. It would be a want of gratitude not to be convinced of the intimate concern he takes in our affairs, after the repeated and decided proofs he has given."— *Washington to de la Luzerne*, 5 May, 1780.

In giving an account to M. de Vergennes of his visit to camp, M. de la Luzerne said: "The time which I passed with General Washington has convinced me more than ever of the very great advantage, which the republic derives from his services. His virtues have gained for him the affection of the army which he commands, and the confidence and respect of the generals and other officers."—*MS. Letter*, May 13th.

I am exceedingly anxious for the fate of Charles Town; more so for the Garrison, and the accumulated stores, in it:—but much rejoiced, and indeed relieved, at hearing that the Governor and part of his Council had left the City for the purpose of supporting legal Government in the State at large.

I am sorry to hear of Huger's misfortune on many accounts. An officer may be beaten and yet obtain honor, but disgrace must for ever accompany surprizes. The want of money is much to be regretted —The consequences may be fatal from causes too many and too obvious to stand in need of enumeration. I am pleased however to hear that the several States from whence accounts are received have either adopted, or are about to adopt the scheme of finance, recommended by Congress. I am clearly in sentiment with you that it ought to be supported although it may be, in some respects, exceptionable.

The arrival of Messrs. Jay and Gerard[1] is a pleasing event, as is that of the Marquis de Lafayette in this country. He is now here, a little indisposed with a cold, but will proceed on to Congress to-morrow or next day. Mrs. Washington and the Gentlemen of my family join their best wishes, most cordially with mine,—to these you will permit me to add my grateful acknowledgments and warmest thanks for your friendly and polite assurances of regard and to declare at the same time that with much esteem and personal attachment, I am, &c.

P. S. I have received fresh, and authentic Intelli-

[1] They landed at Cadiz, 22 January, 1780.

gence that the enemy are in great consternation at New York. They are going to run lines of defence from the East to the North River, are throwing up new Works at the Narrows, and have a number of Vessels loaded with stone to sink and obstruct the entrance of the harbor. Two advice Boats were sent from N. Y. within the space of 48 hours, after the arrival of the despatches from England to Sir Hy. Clinton, &c., &c.

TO JAMES DUANE.

MORRISTOWN, 14 May, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

The arrival of the Marquis de Lafayette opens a prospect, which offers the most important advantages to these States, if proper measures are adopted to improve it.[1] He announces an intention of his court to

[1] When M. de la Luzerne informed the French ministry of the occurrences, which took place in consequence of the Marquis de Lafayette's arrival in America, he said: "General Washington, whose circumspection increases in proportion to the confidence reposed in him by Congress, would not take upon himself the responsibility of arranging a plan of combined operations. After having assured the Marquis de Lafayette, that he would apply himself with all possible activity to hasten forward recruits and to collect provisions, he desired him to proceed immediately to Philadelphia, and concert further measures with the French minister, and particularly as to the expediency of acquainting Congress with the secret of the expected arrival of the French troops." The minister was reluctant to act against his orders in this respect, but was induced to do it chiefly from the fact, that the enemy were already informed of the secret. A New York newspaper had announced, that M. de Ternay would command a squadron destined to aid the Americans, consisting of six vessels, and that six regiments of troops would be embarked. This left no doubt, that the British commander had been informed of particulars. There was no longer occasion to conceal the intelligence from Congress. But it was communicated with caution. The number of forces was not mentioned. The subject was debated three days, and resolutions were passed in conformity with the views of the

send a fleet and army to coöperate effectually with us. In the present state of our finances, and in the total emptiness of our magazines, a plan must be concerted to bring out the resources of the country with vigor and decision. This I think you will agree with me cannot be effected, if the measures to be taken should depend on the slow deliberations of a body so large as Congress, admitting the best disposition in every member to promote the objects in view. It appears to me of the greatest importance, and even of absolute necessity, that a small committee should be immediately appointed to reside near head-quarters, vested with all the powers which Congress have, so far as respects the purpose of a full coöperation with the French fleet and army on the continent. Their

French minister. The powers of Congress were not such as to enable them to demand forces from the States; they could only recommend, and the authority of the governors must be obtained. Nor could there be any longer a reason for withholding from them a secret, which was known to the enemy.—It will be seen in the above letter that General Washington does not hint at the object of the Marquis de Lafayette's visit to Philadelphia.

In fact the British Government were fully apprized of the equipment of a squadron at Brest, destined for America, long before. Notice to this effect was communicated to Sir Henry Clinton as early as the middle of March. "Intelligence received respecting the destination of the armament preparing at Brest," said the Minister, "causes alarm for Newfoundland, Halifax, and Canada. The last is confidently believed to be the object of the enemy; for, besides the expectations constantly entertained by the Americans of such an attack, the dispositions they have made for acting in concert with it, and the hopes given to the Canadians of seeing French troops again in their country, the return of the Marquis de Lafayette to Boston, the nature of the clothing, arms, money, and necessaries provided to be sent with the troops, concur in pointing out that country as the ultimate destination of the armament. Measures have been taken to defeat this project. It is hoped, that you have before this time reinforced General Haldimand with the troops, whom you were disappointed in sending the last year."—*MS. Letter from Lord George Germaine to General Clinton*, March 15th.—*Sparks.*

authority should be plenipotentiary to draw out men and supplies of every kind, and to give their sanction to any operations which the Commander-in-chief may not think himself at liberty to undertake without it, as well beyond as within the limits of these States. The committee can act with despatch and energy. By being on the spot it will be able to provide for exigencies as they rise, and the better to judge of their nature and urgency. The plans in contemplation may be opened to them with more freedom and confidence, than to a numerous body, where secrecy is impossible, where the indiscretion of a single member by disclosing may defeat the project.

I need not enlarge on the advantages of such a measure, as I flatter myself they will all occur to you, and that you will be ready to propose and give it all your support. The conjuncture is one of the most critical and important we have seen; all our prudence and exertions are requisite to give it a favorable issue; hesitancy and delay would in all probability ruin our affairs. Circumstanced as we are, the greatest good or the greatest ill must result. We shall probably fix the independence of America if we succeed, and, if we fail, the abilities of the States will have been so strained in the attempt, that a total relaxation and debility must ensue, and the worst is to be apprehended. These considerations should determine Congress to forego all inferior objects, and unite with mutual confidence in those measures, which seem best calculated to insure success.

* * * * * *

There is no man, that can be more useful as a member of the committee than General Schuyler. His perfect knowledge of the resources of the country, the activity of his temper, his fruitfulness of expedients, and his sound military sense, make me wish, above all things, he may be appointed. I have also a very favorable opinion of Mr. Mathews's understanding and integrity; and I should be willing to trust every thing to the goodness of the other's intentions, if I had not some doubts of his discretion. I wish the Chancellor[1] or yourself could be in the appointment. A well composed committee is of primary importance. I need not hint that the delicacy of these intimations fits them only for your private ear. The opinion I have of your friendship induces me thus freely and confidentially to impart my sentiments on this occasion, and I shall be very happy, if you may agree with me in judgment.

I am with the greatest esteem and regard, &c.

TO GOVERNOR JEFFERSON.

MORRISTOWN, 15 May, 1780.

SIR,

I have the pleasure to inform your Excellency confidentially, that a French fleet may in the course of a few weeks be expected on this coast, and as it is uncertain what part of the land they may first make, gentlemen are to be stationed at different points, to give them signals and to make them some necessary

[1] Robert R. Livingston.

communications immediately upon their arrival. Major Galvan, who will have the honor of delivering this to your Excellency, is appointed to go down to Cape Henry, for the purposes above mentioned; and, as he will have occasion to keep one or two boats in constant readiness to go off upon the appearance of the fleet, I shall be much obliged by your giving an order to the person, who has the superintendence of the public vessels and craft in Virginia, to supply him with the necessary number. Should the public have none of the proper kind in their possession, you will be pleased to recommend to Major Galvan the most certain and speedy method of procuring them. One or two skilful and trusty pilots will also be necessary, that, if any of the ships should have occasion to enter the bay, they may not be at a loss.

Your Excellency will no doubt see the propriety of keeping the object of Major Galvan's mission as much a secret as possible, lest the importance of the despatches, with which he is charged, might be an inducement to some of the disaffected to take him off. It would add much to his security, if your Excellency would be good enough to introduce him to some gentlemen in the neighborhood of Cape Henry, in whom he may confide, and with whom he may remain while in that quarter. It is essentially necessary that Major Galvan should be constantly informed of the operations in South Carolina; and, as he will be out of the common track of intelligence, I have desired him to keep up a communication with your Excellency. Your acquainting him therefore with what

comes to your knowledge, either officially or in a manner sufficiently authentic to be depended upon, may be productive of most salutary consequences. I would beg leave to recommend Major Galvan generally to your Excellency, for every public assistance of which he may stand in need, and particularly to your personal civilities. I am, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HEATH, AT BOSTON.

HEAD-QRS., May 15, 1780.

DR. SIR,

I have the pleasure to inform you in strict confidence, that we have authentic advices of his Most Christian Majesty's determination to send a respectable armament of sea and land forces to operate on the continent, and that the period is not remote when we may expect their arrival. Having informed you of this, I am now to add, that the destruction of Halifax, of the Naval Arsenals and Garrison there, is a primary object with our allies; as, this being effected, the support of the Enemy's marine in those seas and in the West Indies would be exceedingly difficult and precarious, and, in this view, that there is nothing they seem to wish for more. It would certainly be an event of infinite importance to them, and of course to the common cause; and therefore we ought, as far as possible, to give every aid in our power to accomplish it. It may be essential to the success of any attempt, that may be made against the place, to obtain previous information with respect to the force, the corps that

are there, of the number, sort, and condition of the Fortifications, and also the Ships of War; which are points about which our allies appear to be in the dark, and on which unhappily I cannot give them the necessary satisfaction myself. I therefore earnestly request, that you will assist me in this very important business, as far as present circumstances will permit, by communicating to me by the earliest opportunity the result of such inquiries, as you shall make on the subject. You cannot be too minute and particular with respect to it; and I should hope from the frequent flags, which I think I have heard have passed between Halifax and Boston for the exchange of prisoners, that you may gain good and useful intelligence upon the occasion.

I request this as a first step; but, besides, I wish you if possible to send to Halifax, in such way as may appear the most likely to succeed, One or Two persons of good understanding, and upon whose firmness and fidelity we may safely rely, to obtain the most exact account of those matters. If they could be Draftsmen, they would be so much the better, as a good plan of the Fortifications would be of essential service, and is what our Friends are very desirous of obtaining. I have written to Honorable Mr. Bowdoin a confidential Letter on these subjects; and I am persuaded that he and the Council, without disclosing the matter, on your application, if you should find it necessary to make one, will most cheerfully do any thing that may be requisite to promote the plan for gaining intelligence, and will assist you with

money if you should have occasion for it. If you can engage proper persons to go on the Business, you may stipulate with them for a generous compensation to be made to them on their return, and which will be increased in proportion to the importance of the information they bring. You will extend your inquiries in like manner to the post and garrison at Penobscot, and procure the best account of these that you can. If our allies should operate against Halifax, they will necessarily have occasion for some skilful and faithful pilots acquainted with the Coast and Harbor. I therefore wish you to turn your attention to the matter, and to inform me whether such may be had in case they are wanted. You will also do the same with respect to Penobscot. Indeed it might be best, if you have an opportunity, to speak to some of the pilots, who would be proper to be employed, and without discovering the matter with respect to an arrival of a fleet from France, know whether in case of such an expedition they would embark in it.

I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

[1] Very full intelligence was obtained, respecting the particulars mentioned in this letter. Mr. Bowdoin succeeded in procuring a plan of the harbor of Halifax, in which were marked the depth of the water and the position of all the military works.

"I shall be happy, and our interest and character as a nation indispensably require it, if our exertions may be proportioned to this fresh instance of magnanimity and generosity on the part of our ally. I confess I have my fears on this head, as we have now from the pernicious system of short enlistments, nothing left us but the skeleton of an army, and are under great embarrassments with respect to our finance. Every friend to America should give his most active support to these important objects."— *Washington to James Bowdoin*, 15 May, 1780.

"I have the happiness to inform your Excellency, that the Marquis de

TO GOVERNOR RUTLEDGE.

HEAD-QUARTERS, MORRISTOWN,
16 May, 1780.

DR. SIR,

I have the honor to enclose your Excellency two copies of a letter for General Lincoln, which you wlll observe contain intelligence the most important. It is a question how far it is the interest of these States to have the seige of Charles Town raised at this juncture; for if the arrival of the French fleet should find the enemy in their present divided state there is every reason to hope for the most decisive consequences. On the other hand if they should concenter their force at New York an operation against it would be attended with immense difficulty, delay, and hazard—but the Southern States would be relieved—an advantage of the greatest moment. We have great reason to believe the enemy have received advice by a frigate lately from Eng-

Lafayette has brought the interesting intelligence of a French fleet and army, which was to sail from France early in April for this continent to co-operate with us. He has gone on to Congress, and measures will, it is to be hoped, be immediately taken by them to put us in a situation to derive the advantage from this succor, which with proper exertion we have a right to expect. You will be sensible, that there will be a necessity for the concurrence of the legislatures of the different States in providing men and supplies. As I am informed, your Assembly is now sitting, and may probably be about rising; and as the determination of Congress may not arrive in time to prevent its adjournment, I have thought it proper to give this intimation in confidence, that you may keep them together. If they once separate, it will be impossible to reassemble them in time to answer our purposes; and it is of infinite importance that they should be assembled. As this anticipates Congress, it is of course only intended for your private information, and is not to be officially made use of to the Assembly. In the intended co-operation, to whatever point it may be directed, we shall stand in need of all the Continental force we can collect."—*Washington to Governor Clinton*, 18 May, 1780.

land of the intention of our allies; if this is the case, secrecy on our part would answer little purpose (indeed it is to a certain point impracticable). Sir Henry in this case, will probably have taken his measures before this arrives, and unless he expects a naval support from England, will have abandoned the enterprise. Lest, however, a want of certainty in his advices may have induced him to continue his operations, it may be of consequence to apprise General Lincoln and the garrison of the expected succor. It would give new spirit to the defence and may tend to prolong it till effectual assistance can be given, either by directing the French armament to the Southward or by operations in this quarter. You will therefore have the goodness to transmit my letter to him if you have any communication open.

The intention of sending you two copies is this—Should the progress of the enemy against the Town indicate its speedy loss, you can so contrive it, that one of the copies may fall into the enemy's hands, as if by accident, or you can otherwise take effectual measures to give them such information of it as they will believe. This may possibly either precipitate their measure to an unfavorable issue or make them relinquish the seige; and in one way or the other save the Town.

If you should not think the Town in material danger, it will be best to confine the knowledge of what I now communicate, and not let it go beyond General Lincoln. In this case I would not wish to alarm the enemy for the reasons already assigned.

I am happy to learn by the way of New York that Charles Town was still safe the first of this month—I hope it has continued so:—A failure in this attempt will have the greatest influence to the prejudice of the affairs of England. I congratulate you on this new instance of the friendship of our ally. The part the Court of France has acted is truly politic and magnanimous and has a claim to the lasting affection of this country.

With every sentiment of respect and esteem, I have, &c.

P. S. I request your Excellency's opinion as speedily as possible, in case the French fleet and army should proceed to the Southward—where under present circumstances would be a proper place of debarkation, whether a sufficiency of provisions can be procured, the means of transportation for an army, horses for the officers and for a corps of three hundred Cavalry.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE, AT PHILADELPHIA.

HEAD QUARTERS, MORRISTOWN,
16 May, 1780.

MY DEAR MARQUIS,

Since you left me I have more fully reflected on the plan which it will be proper for the French fleet and army to pursue on their arrival upon the Coast; and it appears to me, in the present situation of the enemy at New York, that it ought to be our first object to reduce that post, and that it is of the utmost importance not to lose a moment in repairing to that place. I would therefore advise you to write to the

Count de Rochambeau and Monr. de Ternay in the following spirit, urging them in the strongest terms to proceed, both fleet and army, with all possible expedition to Sandy Hook, where they will be met with further advices of the precise situation, strength, and disposition of the enemy, and of our army, and with proposals for their future movements, unless they should have received authentic accounts that the fleet and troops now operating in the Southern States have evacuated them, and formed a junction at New York. In this case, if they arrive at Rhode Island, they can disembark their troops, dispose of their sick and spare stores, and wait till a more definitive plan can be concerted; or, if they arrive off Cape Henry, they can proceed directly to Rhode Island, and make the same arrangements. But in case they should not have received the accounts above mentioned of the evacuation of the Southern States and junction at New York, and should proceed directly to Sandy Hook as is recommended, they can send their sick, and every thing of which they wish to be disencumbered, to Rhode Island.

The reasons for proceeding immediately to New York, in the present situation of the enemy there, are these. Their whole effective land force, in regular troops, is about 8,000 men, to which may be added about 4,000 refugees, and such of the militia as they would be able by persuasion or force to engage; but on the militia they can I should suppose place little dependence. Their naval force is one ship of 74 guns and three or four small frigates. If the arrival of the French succor should find them in this

situation, the fleet can enter the harbor of New York without difficulty, and this is a point upon which the success of the whole enterprise absolutely turns. By stopping at Rhode Island, if they arrive there, or by passing from Cape Henry to Rhode Island, the most precious time will be lost, which will multiply the chances to the enemy of concentring their force, of receiving a naval reinforcement from England or the West Indies, of increasing their precautions to obstruct the channel and their preparations for the defence of their posts. By gaining possession of the Harbor and cutting off its communication, the present garrison at New York would be unable to resist the efforts of the combined forces; and, together with their ships, must in all probability fall into our hands. On the contrary, if they have time to concentre all their sea and land force on the Continent at New York, the enterprise against that place becomes extremely arduous, has much less prospect of success, and will at least exhaust the whole campaign to bring it to a favorable issue.

The enemy have in the expedition under Sir Henry Clinton about seven thousand land troops, three ships of the line, one fifty-gun, two forty-four, and some smaller frigates. If these ships were added to the force at New York, they would, I apprehend, be sufficient to exclude the French Squadron, unless aided by a vigorous coöperation by land towards Sandy Hook; and the garrison, increased to fourteen or fifteen thousand regular troops, would present immense difficulties in the way of its reduction.

I observed that the French squadron would find no difficulty in entering the port of New York, with the present naval force of the enemy there. The only possible obstacle to this is the obstructions the enemy are preparing; but I am inclined to hope these will be ineffectual and will be easily removed. They last fall made an attempt of the kind, on the expectation of Count d'Estaing; but it failed from the depth of the water and rapidity of the current. Pilots for the harbor can be ready at Black Point in the Jerseys, from which they can go on Board the fleet at its first appearance. I would wish you to place these things in the fullest light to the French Commanders by way of recommendation, leaving it to them to act according to the condition of the fleet and troops with respect to health and other essential matters; and, if they prefer it, to go immediately to Rhode Island from Cape Henry; or, if they arrive at the former place in the first instance, to wait till a Definitive plan is adopted. But I think every reason points to the mode here recommended.

You will be sensible, my Dear Sir, that we can at present only touch upon preliminary measures. The plan for ultimate operations must be the result of mature deliberation, a full view of our resources, and must be formed in conjunction with the General and Admiral of the French forces. I refer Mr. Galvan to you for instructions; but I send you a letter to Governor Jefferson of Virginia to give him any assistance he may require, and to correspond with him on the state of southern affairs. His own discretion, and the

information he will get on the spot, must chiefly govern him. He cannot be despatched too soon.

I request you, in writing to the Count de Rochambeau and Monsieur de Ternay, to assure them of all my respect and consideration, of the high sense I entertain of this distinguished mark of his Christian Majesty's friendship to these States, and of the happiness I anticipate in a personal acquaintance and cooperation with gentlemen, whose reputations have inspired me with the greatest esteem for their talents and merit. You will add, that I will do every thing on my part to give success to the intended operations, and that I flatter myself they will be attended with the happiest consequences. I cannot forbear recalling your attention to the importance of doing every thing possible to engage the Count de Guichen to come upon this Coast without delay. The more I reflect upon it, the more essential it appears. With this addition to our present plan, we should have reason to flatter ourselves with every thing; without it, we have a great deal to apprehend, and, instead of the happiest, the worst consequences may ensue to the common cause. * * * I am, my dear Marquis, with the greatest truth and affection, your friend, &c.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL WAYNE.

HEAD QRS., MORRISTOWN, May 18th, 1780.

DR. SIR,

I yesterday received your obliging favor of the 10th instant. From the great importance of the subject, I confess I am infinitely anxious myself about the issue of the operations against Charles Town; and

wish most cordially that we had it more in our power to pursue means, which would certainly relieve it. The unhappy state of our finance is opposed to this, and lays us under every embarrassment that can be conceived. If we could once get this in a more favorable train, our affairs would look up, and we might do a Thousand things which are now utterly impracticable. I thank you very much for your suggestions with respect to the mode of giving succor in that Quarter, and shall always be happy in the freest communication of your sentiments. The same had often been in my mind, and it would certainly be the most eligible way, if we were in circumstances to pursue it. But besides our distresses on the score of supplies, you will painfully recollect, that this Winter and Spring have put a period to the service of no inconsiderable part of our Force. I also thank you for your attention to the Maryland Troops, and for your endeavors to assist them. A melancholy consideration indeed, that we cannot move even a small detachment, however interesting the occasion, without the greatest difficulty and delay!

I shall be very happy to see you at Camp again, and hope you will without hesitation resume your command in the Pennsylvania line. I know, on a former occasion, you had some difficulties on this head; but, when you consider the point, you will see the propriety of the measure. When I have the pleasure of seeing you, I shall talk with you more fully on the subject.

I am, with very sincere regard and esteem, dear Sir, &c. * * *

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

Hd., Qrs. Morris Town, 19 May, 1780.

I impatiently wait, my Dear Marquis, to know the result of the arrangements you were to make with Congress. The time slides away so fast, and we have so little before us, that every moment is infinitely precious, and ought to be improved. We talked of a Proclamation to the Canadians. If it is not already done, I think it ought not to be delayed. It should be in your own name, and have as much as possible an air of probability. Perhaps it will be more plausible to have two different kinds struck ; one intimating to them the arrival of a french fleet and army in the River St. Lawrence, to coöperate with these States, to be expected, by the way of Rhode Island, where they are to touch, for to answer some importt. purposes, and dwelling on the happy opportunity it will afford them to renew their ancient friendship with France, by joining the allied arms and assisting to make Canada a part of the American confederation, with all the privileges and advantages enjoyed by the other members ; cautioning them by no means to aid the enemy in their preparations for defending the Province. The other proclamation should be drawn, on the supposition of the fleet and army being already arrived, and should contain an animating invitation to arrange themselves under the allied banners. In both proclamations you should hold yourself up as a French and American officer, charged both by the King of France and by Congress with a commission to address them upon the occasion. It may indeed be

well to throw out an idea, that you are to command the corps of American troops destined to coöperate with the French armament. The more mystery in this business the better. It will get out, and it ought to seem to be against our intention.[1]

In a memorandum, you left with Col. Hamilton, you mention pilots to be sent to Cape Henry to conduct the fleet to Rhode Island. This does not appear to me necessary; as there will be pilots ready at Rhode Island to take the fleet into the Harbor, and every navigator can answer the purpose to the entrance of the port. If however you think it will be expected that pilots be ready at Cape Henry, you can apply to the Marine Committee, who can easily provide them. I am, &c.

I forgot to observe, that something might be addressed to the savages. I mentioned to you, when here, the inserting a paragraph in the papers somewhat to this effect:

[1] According to the above suggestion, a proclamation to the Canadians was written in French, and signed by Lafayette. It was long, and contained arguments to persuade the Canadians to join Rochambeau's army when it should arrive, and expel the British from Canada, intimating that the chief object for which the French troops were coming to America was an attack on Canada. The proclamation was intended, not to be sent to the Canadians, but to operate as a stratagem to deceive the British commander, and draw away his attention from New York. The draught was sent to Arnold, with a request that he print five hundred copies, mention being made in the rough sketch of Washington's letter to Arnold, of certain paper "headed with the arms of the King of France, on which it is proposed to print the proclamation." The scheme was probably in part successful, unless it may be supposed that Arnold, who was knowing to the secret, communicated it to the enemy. Several copies fell into the hands of Sir Henry Clinton. He wrote as follows to Lord George Germaine: "I have the honor to transmit to you the copy of a proclamation, which I have reason to believe the Marquis de Lafayette intended to have published in Canada, if the proposed expedition against that province had taken place."—August 31st.

"We have it from good authority, that the Marquis de Lafayette brings the important and agreeable intelligence of a very considerable naval and land force, intended to be sent by his Most Christian Majesty to the succor of these States; and that the Campaign will open with a combined operation against New York. This, there is every reason to hope, with proper exertions on our part, will put a happy period to the war; nor can there be any room to doubt that the glorious opportunity will be effectually improved. This instance of the friendship of our ally is a new claim to the lasting affection and gratitude of this country."

I think such a paragraph will be useful, as the people will be roused by it; while the enemy, by the address to the Canadians and other demonstrations pointing another way, may be distracted by attending to different objects and weakened. You will judge by appearances how far it may be agreeable to Congress. I am, with all affection and sincerity, yours truly.

TO PHILIP SCHUYLER.

MORRISTOWN, 21 May, 1780.

SIR,

Supposing the enemy to continue in their present divided state, where can they be attacked to the greatest advantage, and in what manner can we operate most effectually against them? Is not that part of their army and shipping, which is at the southward, more exposed and liable to a more certain blow, than the other part, which is at New York, where there is uncertainty of getting into the harbor, and where works surrounding the city are already established for its defence, and every possible

exertion using to increase and strengthen them? What danger, for want of secure harbors for ships of the line, would the French fleet be involved in on the Carolina coast? What difficulties should we have to encounter in getting there with the necessary apparatus, provisions, &c? And how could we be supported when there, in case an enterprise of this kind should otherwise be thought eligible?

Supposing again the enemy to form a junction of their force at New York, what is practicable to be done in that case? And what measures had best be pursued in consequence? Again, let us supppose the enemy to have succeeded at Charles Town, that they have captured the garrison employed in defence of it, that they mean to leave a sufficient force in the States of South Carolina and Georgia to hold the towns of Charles Town and Savanna, without aiming at any thing more in that quarter at present; and the rest arrived at New York; what is best for us to do in that case?

In a word, my wish is to have our situation and that of the enemy considered in all the points of view they can be placed, and the most advantageous plan of operation proposed for each. What force in aid of the French army and Continental troops will it be necessary to call upon the States for, in case of an operation against New York? To answer this question, it is necessary to premise, that, in New York and its dependencies, there are at least eight thousand regular troops, besides about four thousand refugees and militia—how many of the latter, (when matters

become serious) can be brought to act, is more than I can tell. At the southward there are about seven thousand regular troops, under the immediate command of Sir Henry Clinton.

Supposing the enemy to continue in the divided state they are at present, and New York (the troops in it I mean) should be our object, how far with perfect safety would it be practicable to let the French troops act separately on long Island, if it should be judged expedient to attack the town by a combined operation in that quarter and from York Island at the same time? Where had the French best establish their hospitals and deposit their heavy stores? Under a full view of all circumstances, what position is most eligible for the American army to take, previous to the arrival of the french fleet and army; and when should it be taken?

TO PHILIP SCHUYLER, JOHN MATHEWS, AND NATHANIEL PEABODY, A COMMITTEE FROM CONGRESS.

MORRIS TOWN, 25 May, 1780.

GENTLEMEN,

I have attentively considered the circular letter to the different States, which you did me the honor to communicate for my perusal, and I am happy to find, that my ideas perfectly correspond with those of the committee. The view they have given of our situation is just, full, and explicit; the measures they have recommended are well adapted to the emergency and of indispensable necessity. I very freely give it as my opinion, that, unless they are carried into execu-

tion in the fullest extent and with the greatest decision and rapidity, it will be impossible for us to undertake the intended coöperation with any reasonable prospect of success.

The consequences you have well delineated. The succor designed for our benefit will prove a serious misfortune, and, instead of rescuing us from the embarrassments we experience, and from the danger with which we are threatened, will, in all probability, precipitate our ruin.[1] Drained and weakened as we already are, the exertions we shall make, though they may be too imperfect to secure success, will at any rate be such as to leave us in a state of relaxation and debility, from which it will be difficult if not impracticable to recover; the Country exhausted, the People dispirited, the consequence and reputation of these States in Europe sunk, our friends chagrined and discouraged, our Enemies deriving new credit, new confidence, new resources. We have not, nor ought we to wish, an alternative. The court of France has done so much for us, that we must make a decisive effort on our part. Our situation demands it, 't is expected. We have the means of success, and it only remains to employ them. But the conjuncture requires all our wisdom and all our energy. Such is the present state of this country, that the utmost exertion of its resources, though equal, is not more than equal to the object, and our measures must be so taken as to call them into immediate and full effect.

[1] That is, unless seconded and made effectual by extraordinary efforts on the part of the Americans.

There is only one thing, which I should have been happy the committee had thought proper to take up on a larger scale; I mean the supply of men by draughts. Instead of compleating the deficiencies of the quotas assigned by the resolution of Congress of the 9th of February last, it would, in my apprehension, be of the greatest importance, that the respective States should fill their Battalions to their complement of five hundred and four, rank and file. Considering the different possible dispositions of the enemy, and the different possible operations on our part, we ought not to have less than Twenty thousand Continental efficient troops. The whole number of Battalions from New Hampshire to Pensylvania inclusive, if complete, would not amount to this force. The total would be twenty-three thousand one hundred and eighty-four, rank and file, from which the customary deductions being made, there will not remain more than about Eighteen thousand fit for the service of the field. To this may be added the remainder of the Sixteen Regiments, amounting to about one thousand.

Unless the principal part of the force be composed of men regularly organized, and on the continuance of whose services we can rely, nothing decisive can be attempted. The Militia are too precarious a dependence to justify such an attempt, where they form a material part of the plan. Militia cannot have the necessary habits nor the consistency, either for an assault or a siege. In employing them essentially, we should run a risk of being abandoned in the most critical moments. The expense and the consumption

of Provisions and stores, (which we are bound by every motive to economize,) will be very considerably increased. As we should not be able to keep the same body in the field, during the whole campaign, we should a great part of the time have a double set of men to pay and feed, those in actual service, and those on the march to relieve them or returning home when relieved. The operations of husbandry will suffer in proportion.

The mode by Draught is, I am persuaded, the only efficacious one to obtain men. It appears to me certain, that it is the only one to obtain them in time; nor can the period, which you have appointed for bringing them into the field, be delayed without defeating the object. I have little doubt, that at any time, and much less at the present juncture, the powers of government exerted with confidence will be equal to the purpose of Draughting. The hopes of the people, elevated by the prospects before them, will induce a chearful compliance with this and all the other measures of vigor, which have been recommended, and which the exigency requires. Notwithstanding the extension of the Draught which I have taken the liberty to advise, occasional aids of militia will be still wanted, but in much less number in this case than in the other. I have entire confidence, that the respective Legislatures will be fully impressed with the importance and delicacy of the present juncture, and will second the views of the committee by the most speedy and vigorous efforts. With every sentiment of respect and esteem, I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QRS., MORRIS TOWN,
27 May, 1780.

SIR,

It is with infinite pain I inform Congress, that we are reduced again to a situation of extremity for want of meat. On several days of late, the Troops have been entirely destitute of any, and for a considerable time past they have been at best, at half, a quarter, an Eighth allowance of this essential article of provision. The men have borne their distress in general with a firmness and patience never exceeded, and every commendation is due the officers for encouraging them to it, by exhortation and by example. They have suffered equally with the men, and their relative situations considered, rather more. But such reiterated, constant instances of want are too much for the soldiery, and cannot but lead to alarming consequences. Accordingly Two Regiments of the Connecticut line mutinied, and got under arms on Thursday night. And but for the timely exertions of some of their officers, who got notice of it, it might have been the case with the whole, with a determination to return home, or at best to gain subsistence at the point of the bayonet. After a good deal of expostulation by their officers and some of the Pennsylvania line, who had come to their assistance, and after parading their regiments upon the occasion, the men were prevailed on to go to their huts; but a few nevertheless turned out again with their packs, who are now confined. Colonel Meigs, who acted with

great propriety in endeavoring to suppress the mutiny, was struck by one of the soldiers. I wish our situation was better with respect to provision in other quarters, but it is not. They are in as great distress at West Point to the full; and, by a Letter of the 19th from Colo. Van Schaick at Albany, he informs me, that the Garrison of Fort Schuyler had then only a month's supply on hand, and that there was no more provision to send them. From this detail Congress will see how distressing our situation is; but there are other matters which still contribute to render it more alarming.

By advices received from prisoners who escaped from Montreal about the last of April and some who escaped from other parts of Canada, the Enemy were assembling a considerable force at Montreal, composed of Regulars, Tories and Savages, and making preparations of Cannon, &c. for an expedition against Fort Schuyler, on which they were to set out the 15th Instant. How far this may really be the case I cannot determine, but by a Letter received to-day by Gen. Schuyler from His Excellency Governor Clinton, dated at Kingston the 23d, Sir John Johnston had penetrated as far as Johnstown, and seemed to be taking post. If a force is coming against Fort Schuyler and which it is to be apprehended is the case to justify this measure—the manœuvre must be intended to prevent supplies of provision (supposing we had them) from being thrown into the Garrison. In consequence of this disagreeable intelligence, I have determined if it can possibly be done, to put the

York Troops in motion for the North River and embark them for Albany—from whence they will proceed and act as circumstances will admit and require.[1] What they will do for provisions I know not, as we have none; and as the great exertions of the State for the support of the Army last year, and that part of it which lies at the Highland posts till the present time—added to the shortness and bad quality of their crops with the destruction of several of their Frontier settlements, have drained the Inhabitants to the distress of their families. I am now entreated in the most pressing terms, to send on flour to supply the Troops at West Point, and from the fullest persuasion of the inability of the State of New York to do more than she has already—I was compelled two days ago to order a Hundred Barrells of flour to be forwarded from here even for the Troops at Fort Schuyler.

Nothing is farther from my wishes, than to add in the smallest degree to the distresses or embarrassments of Congress on any occasion, and more particularly on one where I have every reason to fear they have it not in their power to administer the least relief. Duty however compels me to add one matter more to those I have already detailed. I have been informed by the Two Colonels of the Pennsylvania line, in whom I have the utmost confidence, who were called to assist Colo: Meigs to suppress the mutiny on Thursday night, that in the course of their expostulations the troops very pointedly men-

[1] The instructions given to Brigadier-General James Clinton to proceed to Albany are printed in Sparks' *Writings of Washington*, vii., p. 64.

tioned, besides their distresses for provision, their not being paid for Five months ; and, what is of a still more serious and delicate nature in our present circumstances, they mentioned the great depreciation of the money, it's being of little or no value at all, and yet, if they should be paid, that it would be in this way, and according to the usual amount, without an adequate allowance for the depreciation. They were reasoned with, and every argument used that these gentlemen and Colo : Meigs could devise, either to interest their pride or their passions ; they were reminded of their past good conduct ; of the late assurances of Congress ; of the objects for which they were contending ; but their answer was, that their sufferings were too great, and that they wanted present relief, and some present substantial recompense for their services. This matter, I confess, tho' I have heard of no further uneasiness among the men, has given me infinitely more concern, than any thing that has ever happened, and strikes me as the most important, because we have no means at this time, that I know of, for paying the troops, but in Continental money ; and as it is evidently impracticable, from the immense quantity it would require, to pay them in this, as much as would make up the depreciation. Every possible means in my power will be directed on this and on all occasions, as they ever have been, to preserve order and promote the public service ; but in such an accumulation of distresses, amidst such a variety of embarrassments, which surround us on all sides, this will be found at least ex-

tremely difficult. If the troops could only be comfortably supplied with provisions, it would be a great point, and such as would with the event we expect soon to take place, the arrival of the armament from France to our succor, make them forget or at least forego many matters, which make a part of their anxiety and present complaints. I am, &c.[1]

P. S. I enclose Your Excellency three New York Gazettes; also a small printed paper found in our camp, containing an address to our soldiers by the enemy, to induce them to desert. It is most likely, that many copies were dispersed, and that they have had a considerable effect, tho' this is the only one that has been seen by the officers, notwithstanding their pains to find them. Your Excellency will see the points on which the enemy particularly found their addresses.[2]

[1] Read in Congress, May 31st. Referred to Ellsworth, Armstrong, and Duane.

[2] "The time is at length arrived, when all the artifices, and falsehoods of the Congress and of your commanders can no longer conceal from you, the misery of your situation; you are neither Clothed, Fed nor Paid; your numbers are wasting away by Sickness, Famine, Nakedness, and rapidly so by the period of your stipulated Services, being in general expired, this is then the moment to fly from slavery and fraud.

"I am happy in acquainting the old countrymen, that the affairs of Ireland are fully settled, and that Great Britain and Ireland are firmly united, as well from interest as from affection: I need not now tell you who are born in America, that you have been cheated and abused; and you are both sensible, that in order to procure your liberty you must quit your leaders, and join your real friends who scorn to impose upon you, and who will receive you with open arms, kindly forgiving all your errors.

"You are told that you are surrounded by a numerous militia, this is also false—associate them together, make use of your firelocks and join the British Army, where you will be permitted to dispose of yourselves as you please."

TO PRESIDENT REED.

MORRISTOWN, May 28, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I am obliged to you for your favor of the 23d.

Nothing could be more necessary, than the aid given by your State towards supplying us with provision. I assure you, every idea you can form of our distresses will fall short of the reality. There is such a combination of circumstances to exhaust the patience of the soldiery, that it begins at length to be worn out, and we see in every line of the army the most serious features of mutiny and sedition. All our departments, all our operations, are at a stand; and unless a system, very different from that which for a long time prevailed, be immediately adopted throughout the States, our affairs must soon become desperate beyond the possibility of recovery. If you were on the spot, my dear Sir, if you could see what difficulties surround us on every side, how unable we are to administer to the most ordinary calls of the service, you would be convinced, that these expressions are not too strong, and that we have almost ceased to hope. The country in general is in such a state of insensibility and indifference to its interest, that I dare not flatter myself with any change for the better.

The committee of Congress, in their late address to the several States, have given a just picture of our situation. I very much doubt its making the desired impression; and, if it does not, I shall consider our lethargy as incurable. The present juncture is so interesting, that if it does not produce correspondent

exertions, it will be a proof that motives of honor, public good, and even self-preservation, have lost their influence upon our minds. This is a decisive moment; one of the most, (I will go further and say, *the most*) important America has seen. The court of France has made a glorious effort for our deliverance, and if we disappoint its intentions by our supineness, we must become contemptible in the eyes of all mankind; nor can we after that venture to confide, that our allies will persist in an attempt to establish what it will appear we want inclination or ability to assist them in.

Every view of our own circumstances ought to determine us to the most vigorous efforts; but there are considerations of another kind, that should have equal weight.—The combined fleets of France and Spain last year were greatly superior to those of the enemy.—The enemy nevertheless sustained no material damage, and at the close of the campaign have given a very important blow to our allies. This campaign the difference between the fleets, from every account I have been able to collect, will be very inconsiderable. Indeed it is far from clear, that there will not be an equality.—What are we to expect will be the case, if there should be another campaign? In all probability the advantage will be on the side of the English. And then what would become of America? We ought not to deceive ourselves. The maritime resources of Great Britain are more substantial and real, than those of France and Spain united. Her commerce is more extensive, than that of both her rivals; and it is an axiom, that the nation which has

the most extensive commerce will always have the most powerful marine. Were this argument less convincing, the fact speaks for itself. Her progress in the course of the last year is an incontestable proof.

It is true, France in a manner created a Fleet in a very short space, and this may mislead us in the judgment we form of her naval abilities. But, if they bore any comparison with those of Great Britain, how comes it to pass, that, with all the force of Spain added, she has lost so much ground in so short a time, as now to have scarcely a superiority? We should consider what was done by France, as a violent and unnatural effort of the government, which, for want of sufficient foundation, cannot continue to operate proportionable effects.

In modern wars, the longest purse must chiefly determine the event. I fear that of the enemy will be found to be so. Though the government is deeply in debt, and of course poor, the Nation is rich, and their riches afford a fund, which will not be easily exhausted. Besides, their system of public credit is such, that it is capable of greater exertion than that of any other nation. Speculatists have been a long time foretelling its downfall; but we see no symptoms of the catastrophe being very near. I am persuaded that it will at least last out the war, and then in the opinion of many of the best politicians it will be a national advantage. If the war should terminate successfully, the crown will have acquired such influence and power, that it may attempt any thing; and a bankruptcy will probably be made a ladder to climb

to absolute authority. Administration may perhaps wish to drive matters to this issue. At any rate they will not be restrained, by an apprehension of it, from forcing the resources of the state. It will promote their present purposes, on which their all is at stake, and it may pave the way to triumph more effectually over the constitution. With this disposition I have no doubt that ample means will be found to prosecute the war with the greatest vigor.

France is in a very different position. The abilities of her present financier has done wonders. By a wise administration of the revenues, aided by advantageous loans, he has avoided the necessity of additional taxes; but I am well informed, if the war continues another campaign, he will be obliged to have recourse to the taxes usual in time of war, which are very heavy; and which the people of France are not in a condition to endure for any duration. When this necessity commences, France makes war on ruinous terms, and England, from her individual wealth, will find much greater facility in supplying her exigencies.

Spain derives great wealth from her mines, but not so great as is generally imagined. Of late years the profit to government is essentially diminished. Commerce and industry are the best means of a nation; both which are wanting to her. I am told her treasury is far from being so well filled as we have flattered ourselves. She is also much divided on the propriety of the war. There is a strong party against it. The temper of the nation is too sluggish to admit of great exertions; and, though the Courts of the two King-

doms are closely linked together, there never has been in any of their wars a perfect harmony of measures, nor has it been the case in this; which has already been no small detriment to the common cause.

I mention these things to show, that the circumstances of our allies, as well as our own, call for peace; to obtain which we must make one great effort this campaign. The present instance of the friendship of the court of France is attended with every circumstance, that can render it important and agreeable, that can interest our gratitude or fire our emulation. If we do our duty, we may even hope to make the campaign decisive on this continent. But we must do our duty in earnest, or disgrace and ruin will attend us. I am sincere in declaring a full persuasion, that the succor will be fatal to us, if our measures are not adequate to the emergency.[1]

Now, my dear Sir, I must observe to you, that much will depend on the State of Pennsylvania. She has it in her power to contribute, without comparison, more to our success than any other State, in the two essential articles of flour and transportation. New York, Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maryland are our flour countries. Virginia went little on this article the last crop, (and her resources are called for to the southward). New York, by Legislative coercion, has already given all she could spare for the use of the army. Her inhabitants are left with scarcely a suffi-

[1] A letter in these very words was also written to Benjamin Harrison. See *Washington to Joseph Jones*, 22 July, 1780.

ciency for their own subsistence. Jersey, from being so long the place of the army's residence, is equally exhausted. Maryland has made great exertions, but she can still do something more. Delaware may contribute handsomely in proportion to her extent. But Pennsylvania is our chief dependence. From every information I can obtain, she is at this time full of flour. I speak to you in the language of frankness and as a friend. I do not mean to make any insinuations unfavorable to the State. I am aware of the embarrassment the government labors under, from the open opposition of one party and the underhand intrigues of another. I know that, with the best dispositions to promote the public service, you have been obliged to move with circumspection. But this is a time to hazard and to take a tone of energy and decision. All parties but the disaffected will acquiesce in the necessity and give their support. The hopes and fears of the people at large may be acted upon in such a manner, as to make them approve and second your views. The matter is reduced to a point. Either Pennsylvania must give us all the aid we ask of her, or we can undertake nothing. We must renounce every idea of coöperation, and must confess to our allies, that we look wholly to them for our safety. This will be a state of humiliation and littleness, against which the feelings of every good American ought to revolt. Yours I am convinced will; nor have I the least doubt, that you will employ all your influence to animate the legislature and the people at large. The fate of these States hangs

upon it. God grant we may be properly impressed with the consequences.

I wish the legislature could be engaged to vest the executive with Plenipotentiary powers. I should then expect every thing practicable from your abilities and zeal. This is not a time for formality or ceremony. The crisis, in every point of view, is extraordinary; and extraordinary expedients are necessary. I am decided in this opinion.[1] I am happy to hear, that you have a prospect of complying with the requisitions of Congress for specific supplies; that the spirit of the City and State seems to revive, and the warmth of party decline. These are good omens of our success. Perhaps this is the proper period to unite. I am obliged to you for the renewal of your assurances of personal regard. My sentiments for you, you are too well acquainted with to make it necessary to tell you with how much esteem and regard I am, dr. Sir, &c.

P. S.—I felicitate you on the increase of your family. Mrs. Washington does the same, and begs her particular respects and congratulations to Mrs. Reed to which permit me to add mine.

TO THE HON. COMMITTEE OF COÖPERATION.

GENTLEMEN, HEAD QUARTERS, 31 May, 1780.

In the expected coöperation it is of great Moment that we should proceed with Circumspection and on

[1] "I understand they [the legislature of Pennsylvania] have invested the Executive with a dictatorial authority from which nothing but the *lives* of their citizens are exempted. I hope the good resulting from it will be such as to compensate for the risk of the precedent."—*Madison to Jefferson*, 2 June, 1780.

the surest ground—Before we can determine what ought to be undertaken, we should be able to appreciate the means we shall have it in our power to employ—on some precise scale. To begin an enterprise against New York for instance, on a general presumption of sufficient resources in the Country, or proportionable exertions in the respective governments to bring them forth, would hardly be justified by success—could never be defended in case of misfortune, to say nothing of the fatal consequences that might ensue. It appears to me necessary to ascertain the number of men and the quantity of supplies which the States are capable of furnishing in a given time, and to obtain assurances from them founded in experience of their continuing supplies in the same proportion.

I esteem the plan adopted by the Committee in their circular letter an extremely good preparatory one. But I think it of indispensable importance in the next place to come to some thing fixed and determinate. I therefore take the Liberty to submit to the Committee the necessity and propriety of calling immediately upon the States, for aids of men, provisions, forage, and the means of transportation.

To enable them to judge of the number of men we shall want the following observations may be of use.

Our arrangements should be made on the principle of the greatest enterprize we can undertake and against the whole force of the enemy united—that is an enterprize against N. York with the Troops acting to the Southward added to its present garrison.

The enemy's force at New York on this supposition cannot be estimated lower than fifteen thousand regular Troops—besides Refugees & Militia which are said to amount to four or five thousand, but let the whole be estimated at 17,500.

Double this number is the least we can ask to operate against it—that is 35,000 effective men, besides two small Corps, the one at West-point, the other in the Jerseys for Covering our Communications and attacking Powles Hook, if the enemy retain possession of that Post—In Europe to besiege Troops in fortified places, the proportion of men necessary is computed at six to one in favor of the besiegers. We cannot ask less than two to one against N. York—allowing us the command of the water which will be a material advantage.

The Corps of French Troops will probably not exceed on their arrival five thousand effective men—the residue of 30,000 must be furnished by us, together with about fifteen hundred for the two detachments above mentioned.

To have this effective force our total at the lowest calculation cannot be less than 40,000 rank and file.

The Battalions in this quarter compleated by drafts as recommended by the Committee in their circular Letter, will amount to 22,680—the Ballance of 17,320 must consist of Militia.

These must be furnished by the States from New Hampshire to Maryland inclusive according to the proximity and ability of each. It is proposed that they be assembled at appointed places of rendezvous

by the last of June—to serve for three, or at least two months after Joining the Army.

I have had estimates formed, which are inclosed for the Consideration of the Committee, of the Quantity of provisions requisite for the supply of an Army of 40,000 men for a month—of forage for the same period—and of horses and waggons for the Campaign attached to the Army; other estimates are annexed apportioning these to the States from New Hampshire to Virginia inclusive having regard to the resources of each and their relative position to the probable scene of our operations.

My idea is to call upon those States to furnish their quotas by the last of June and to give explicit information how far it will be in their power to keep up the supply in the same proportion to the last of November.

This brings the business to a point. The States must either give us what we want in the time required —or manifest their inability to do it, and we can take our measures accordingly—Particular commonly make a livelier impression than general ideas—If we only urge the States to adopt a plan for bringing forth all its resources, they may proceed on some vague notion of the extent of our wants and satisfy themselves with arrangement which though ample enough to be plausible may yet fall far short of the object—If we make a demand of definite aids, they will have a fixed point to regulate themselves by and their measures will be equal to it, if they are in a condition to command the means. In my opinion requisitions of this nature will

at once serve to guide and stimulate. At any rate their operation will inform us what we have to expect and what we ought to do.

I have one doubt of the expediency of immediately calling for the Militia, which is that it may possibly operate to the prejudice of the proposed draft for the Continental Battalions—But there is in all probability so little space between this and the execution of our projects that we seem to have not a moment to lose—I am clear in the expediency of asking specific supplies.

It appears to me essential that there should be a perfect understanding on all hands—that the States should know our wants—what is expected by us—that we should know their abilities—and what we may expect from them. I should not fear to discourage by alarming them with the largeness of our demands, if it could be supposed they would not bear the knowledge of our wants, we could not flatter ourselves they would supply them. But their wisdom and patriotism will certainly do every thing their resources will permit.

If the Committee should desire a conference on these subjects; I shall do myself the honor to attend them whenever and wherever they please. With perfect respect, &c.[1]

[1] On the 2d of June the committee from Congress in camp sent a circular letter to all the eastern and middle States, representing the condition of the army, and the necessity of complying as soon as possible with the requisitions of Congress for troops and supplies. General Washington enforced the representations of the committee by another circular of the same date, in which he urged, in a particular manner, that the quotas of men should be raised and sent

TO JOSEPH JONES, IN CONGRESS.

DEAR SIR, MORRISTOWN, 31 May, 1780.

I have been honored with your favor in answer to my letter respecting the appointment of a committee, with two others of later dates. * * * Certain I am, unless Congress speak in a more decisive tone, unless they are vested with powers by the several States competent to the great purposes of war, or assume them as matter of right, and they and the States respectively act with more energy than they hitherto have done, that our cause is lost. We can no longer drudge on in the old way. By ill timing the adoption of measures, by delays in the execution of them, or by unwarrantable jealousies, we incur enormous expenses and derive no benefit from them. One State will comply with a requisition of Congress; another neglects to do it; a third executes it by halves; and all differ

to the army without the least delay. The numbers for each State, and the places in which they were to rendezvous, were specified as follows:

States.	Quotas.	Regiments.	Place of Rendezvous.
New Hampshire	945	2	Claverac
Massachusetts	4725	9	Claverac
Rhode Island	630	1	Providence
Connecticut	2520	5	Danbury
New York	1575	3	Fishkill
New Jersey	945	2	Morristown
Pennsylvania	3465	7	Easton and Trenton
Delaware	315	1	Wilmington
Maryland	2205	4	Head of Elk

The quotas from the other States were intended for the southern army, and were subject to the orders of the commander in that department.

On June 1st Washington received a handbill from New York announcing the surrender of Charleston on the 12th of May. "The particulars are not given; some leading matters are mentioned, but they are probably either false or exaggerated. There are circumstances of suspicion attending this account, but as it is announced by authority, I cannot suppose it to be a forgery, but believe the general facts of a surrender to be true. The conditions may be more or less advantageous."—*Washington to Governor Trumbull*, 1 June, 1780.

either in the manner, the matter, or so much in point of time, that we are always working up hill, and ever shall be; and, while such a system as the present one or rather want of one prevails, we shall ever be unable to apply our strength or resources to any advantage.

This, my dear Sir, is plain language to a member of Congress; but it is the language of truth and friendship. It is the result of long thinking, close application, and strict observation. I see one head gradually changing into thirteen. I see one army branching into thirteen, which, instead of looking up to Congress as the supreme controlling power of the United States, are considering themselves as dependent on their respective States. In a word, I see the powers of Congress declining too fast for the consideration and respect, which are due to them as the great representative body of America, and I am fearful of the consequences.

Till your letter of the 23d came to hand, I thought General Weedon had actually resigned his commission; but, be this as it may, I see no possibility of giving him a command out of the line of his own State. He certainly knows, that every State that has troops enough to form a brigade, claims and has uniformly exercised the privilege of having them commanded by a brigadier of their own. Nor is it in my power to depart from this system, without convulsing the army, which at all times is hurtful, and at this it might be ruinous. I am sincerely and affectionately yours, etc.[1]

[1] General Weedon had retired from the service, while the army was at Valley Forge, on account of some difficulty with General Woodford respecting rank. Mr. Jones had inquired whether he could not be restored, so as to

TO THE CHEVALIER DE LA LUZERNE.

MORRISTOWN, 5 June, 1780.

SIR,

My time has been so entirely engrossed in the preliminary arrangements of immediate necessity towards the intended coöperation, that I have not been able till now to do myself the honor to thank your Excellency for your letter of the 21st of May. We have too many proofs of the generous zeal of your countrymen in the cause of America, not to be entirely convinced of it, and to feel all that the most grateful sensibility can inspire. I am happy in believing, that the troops and citizens of these States will

have a command in the line at large. In his reply to the above letter Mr. Jones wrote: "Congress have been gradually surrendering or throwing upon the several States the exercise of powers, which they should have claimed, and to their utmost have exercised themselves, till at length they have scarcely a power left, but such as concerns foreign transactions; for, as to the army, Congress is at present little more than the medium through which the wants of the army are conveyed to the States. This body never had, or at least in few instances ever exercised, powers adequate to the purposes of war; and indeed such as they possessed have been frittered away to the States, and it will be found, I fear, very difficult to recover them. A resolution was passed the other day, desiring the States to inform us what they had done upon certain requirements for some time past, that we might know upon what to rely. This may serve as a basis for assuming powers, should the answers afford an opening. Other resolutions are now before us, by one of which the States are desired to give express powers to call forth men, provisions, and money for carrying on the war for the common defence. Others go to the assumption of them immediately. The first I have no doubt will pass this body, but I expect it will sleep with the States. The others I believe will die where they are; for, so cautious are some of offending the States in this respect, that a gentleman the other day plainly told us, upon a proposition to order some armed vessels to search the vessels going out, with a view to prevent the exportation of flour, that, if an embargo was laid in the Delaware as in this State, he would consent to the measure, otherwise he never would agree to such an exercise of power."

eagerly embrace every opportunity to manifest their affection to the troops and citizens of your nation, as well as their gratitude and veneration to a prince, from whom they have received the most important benefits. Penetrated with a sense of these, I shall think it my duty to cultivate correspondent sentiments, as far as my influence extends.[1]

The Marquis has given me an account of all your Excellency has done for the advancement of the combined operations. It will no doubt contribute essentially to their success, and give you a claim to the acknowledgments of the two countries. I am too sensible of the value of the permission you give me, to solicit your aid in every thing in which you can continue to afford us your good offices, not to make use of it as frequently as possible. I begin by entreating you to favor me with your advice with the greatest freedom, on whatever occurs to you interesting to our affairs at this period. I have the honor to be, etc.

[1] "It is expected that the fleet of our ally will in the first instance touch at Rhode Island, for the purpose of landing their sick and supernumerary stores, and to meet the intelligence necessary to direct their operations. I have already sent forward Docr. Craik to take up proper houses for hospitals, and to make some previous arrangements in that department; but, as I apprehend the French General and Admiral will, upon their arrival, want the advice and assistance of a person of discretion and judgment, and acquainted with the Country, I must request you to repair immediately to Providence, and upon their arrival present yourself to them, letting them know that they may command your services. I would wish you to endeavor, in conjunction with the governor, to establish a market between the Fleet and Army and Country, and be careful that our Allies are not imposed upon in the prices of articles, which they may find necessary. This is a point recommended in the plan drawn up by the ministry of France, and which policy and generosity direct should be strictly attended to."— *Washington to Major-General Heath*, 2 June, 1780.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HOWE.

HD. QRS., HEIGHTS ABOVE SPRINGFIELD,
10 June, 1780.

DR. SIR,

I have received your several letters of the 5th, 6th and 8th of June.

You do well to consider the post of West point as the capital object of your attention, and every other as secondary. This is peculiarly necessary at the present moment, as there are circumstances that authorize a suspicion of something being intended against that post. I would therefore have you by all means keep your force collected in such manner, that there may not be a possibility of your being found in a divided state, in case of a sudden movement of the enemy your way.[1]

[1] "In my letter of the 10th instant I urged you to collect all your force for the immediate defence of the posts of West Point and its dependencies. I hope it will be done before this reaches you; but, if any part of your force remains divided, you will instantly call it in, and keep yourself compact, whatever temptations may be thrown out to induce you to detach. If the enemy's designs should be against this army, you may be useful to us by making a demonstration in your quarter. I would therefore have you collect a number of boats at West Point, sufficient for two thousand men; put the garrison under moving orders with three days' provisions; circulate ideas of having the militia ready for a sudden call; apply to Governor Trumbull for the advance of the Connecticut State regiments; and take such other steps as may make a noise, without overdoing the matter, and give the enemy some alarm.

"You can also send some emissary into New York with these particulars, so colored as to give them the greatest likelihood of making the desired impression You may instruct him to tell the enemy, that he was sent in to find out the general state and disposition of the force on the Island of New York; but that his inquiries were more particularly to be directed to the magazines at Fort Washington and other places accessible by water. If any movements of the enemy should come to your knowledge, which announce an immediate attempt upon your post, you will give notice to the governor of Connecticut, and solicit succor from that State. I have desired General McDougall to join you without delay."—*Washington to Major-General Howe*, 15 June, 1780.

General Kniphausen, (we have reason to believe,) with all the force that he could spare from New York, made an incursion into the Jerseys the night of the 6th instant, and proceeded early next morning towards Connecticut Farms, about five miles from Elizabeth Town. In the night of the 7th he retired to the point of his debarkation beyond Elizabeth Town, where he has remained ever since and has been crossing and recrossing his cavalry and baggage. His whole conduct is inexplicable, and begins to have much the air of an amusement. T' is probable Clinton, with the whole or a part of the troops under his command, is momently expected at New York; and the present movement may be intended to draw our attention this way, while he on his arrival pushes immediately up the North River and attacks the forts, united with what troops still remain in New York.

The day Kniphausen moved out, he was very severely galled by an advanced corps of Continental troops, and the Jersey militia, who have turned out and acted with admirable spirit on this occasion. We conjectured at first, that his coming out was to forage or to draw us down into the plain and give us battle. But, as he did not pursue the first, and he must have seen that we shall not fight him but upon our own terms, we cannot see why he should remain in his present position so long. We are therefore led to the other conjecture respecting you. Use all possible vigilance and caution. It is not improbable Clinton's brigade may shortly reinforce you. The enemy have a good many cavalry, and we have none

here. You will despatch immediately Moylan's Regiment to join us. Sheldon's will continue with you. His infantry on an emergency may be thrown into the garrison.[1] * * *

TO THE COMMITTEE OF COÖPERATION.

HEADQUARTERS, SPRINGFIELD,
June 11th, 1780.

GENTLEMEN,—

It appears to me to be a very eligible step, at the present Juncture to reiterate our instances with the several States, to engage them to press the measures recommended in your former letter. Not only the time is sliding away very fast, every moment of which ought to be improved for the intended coöperation, but the movements of the enemy demand every exertion in our power for the purposes of defence.

[1] "On Tuesday night the enemy landed at Elizabeth Town point with all the force they could draw from New York and its dependencies, under the command of General Knyphausen, and proceeded the next morning into the country about 7 miles, within half a mile of this place. At night they retired to the point of debarcation, where they have remained ever since. In their advance they were most spiritedly opposed by the Jersey troops, which lay in the neighborhood, and by such of the militia as had an opportunity, from their situation and the suddenness of the occasion, to turn out, and there is reason to believe they were a good deal galled. Brigadier-General Stirling, it seems from good authority, was wounded in the thigh soon after they debarked by our picket. This movement of the enemy brought the army to this post on Wednesday last. The cause which justifies this insulting manœuvre on their part most deeply affects the honor of the States—a vindication of which could not be attempted in the present situation of the army, without most eminently hazarding their security—at least so far as it might depend upon the safety of the latter. Such is our weak, diminished condition. Our character, our interest, our all that is dear, demand that the States should without the least delay fill their battalions according to their established complement. If this is not done, we cannot coöperate with the force so generously coming from our ally on any large scale, and [we] may, however flattering our views of success may be thought by many, easily become a ruined and undone people."—*Washington to Governor Bowdoin*, 14 June, 1780.

There can now remain no doubt that Charlestown and its garrison have fallen. There is every reason to believe that Sir Henry Clinton, with the whole or the greatest part of his force, will shortly arrive in New York. The expectation of the French fleet and army will certainly determine the enemy to unite their force. General Knyphausen still continues in the Jerseys with all the force which can be spared from New York; a force greatly superior to ours. Should Sir Henry join him the superiority will be decided, and equal to almost any thing the enemy may think proper to attempt. It is true they are at this time inactive, but their continuance where they are proves that they have some project of importance in contemplation. Perhaps they are only waiting till the militia grow tired and return home (which they are doing every hour) to prosecute their designs with less opposition. This would be a critical moment for us. Perhaps they are waiting the arrival of Sir Henry Clinton, either to push up the North River against the Highland posts or to bend their whole force against the army. In either case the most disastrous consequences are to be apprehended. You who are well acquainted with our situation need no arguments to evince the danger. The militia of this State have run to arms and behaved with an ardor and spirit of which there are few examples. But perseverance in enduring the rigors of military service is not to be expected from those who are not by profession obliged to it. The reverse of this opinion has been a great misfortune in our affairs, and it is high time we should recover from an error

of so pernicious a nature. We must absolutely have a force of a different composition, or we must relinquish the contest. In a few days we may expect to have to depend almost wholly on our Continental force, and this (from your own observation) is totally inadequate to our safety. The exigency calls loudly upon the States to carry all the recommendations of the Committee into the most vigorous and immediate execution, but more particularly that of completing our battalions by a draft, and with all the expedition possible.

I beg leave to advise that these ideas be all clearly held up to the States. Whatever inconvenience there may be in diffusing the knowledge of our circumstances, delicate as they are, there is, in my opinion, more danger in concealing than disclosing them. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO GOVERNOR LIVINGSTON.

SPRINGFIELD, 18 June, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I have received advice, which appears to be direct, that the legislature of this State has determined on a draft from the militia to serve for the campaign under their own officers, instead of being incorporated with their Continental battalions. This mode, if adopted, will be attended with so many inconveniences if followed by the States in general, and will be so absolutely pernicious to all the prospects of the campaign, that I cannot forbear taking the liberty to send Briga-

dier-General Knox to represent, on my part, the ill consequences of the measure, and the superior advantages of the plan recommended in preference. I entreat your Excellency to procure him the honor of a conference with the legislature for this purpose. The crisis is so delicate and important, the honor and interest of these States so essentially depend on a judicious and vigorous exertion of our resources at this juncture, that I cannot but manifest my anxiety, when I see any measures in agitation that threaten the disappointment of our hopes, and take every step in my power to prevent their being carried into execution. In military questions, the officers of the army have a right to flatter themselves their country will place some confidence in their experience and judgment; and it is the policy of every wise nation to do it. I cannot doubt, that, on consideration, the zeal and wisdom, which have distinguished the councils of this State, will embrace what the true interest of America on this occasion demands. I have the honor to be, with every sentiment of respect and esteem, your Excellency's most obedient servant.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HOWE.[1]

SPRINGFIELD, 20 June, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I have recd. your favors of the 16th and 18th, two of each date. The Express who brought the last,

[1] On the 18th, Washington learned through General Forman of Clinton's return from the southward, and at once wrote to Howe to be prepared for an attack. Governor Clinton was to be called upon for 2,500 militia, and rein-

left King's ferry yesterday at sunrise and informs me that the Vessels had gone down the river and were out of sight.

The posts at Stony and Verplanck's Points were established more with a view of preventing the communication from being interrupted by a vessel or two with a small body of men, than from an expectation that they would be able to stand a regular investiture or a serious attack in force. The officers, therefore, who command them, should be directed to govern themselves by appearances and circumstances. If the enemy come up in force, they will be under the necessity of making such demonstration, by the number of their Vessels and other preparations, as will evince their design. The officers are then to withdraw their Garrisons at all events, and Cannon and Stores if possible. To give them the better chance of effecting the latter, Boats should be constantly kept at each place, appropriated to that service only. There is a bare possibility, that the enemy may throw a force suddenly in the rear of each, and run a Vessel above them. In such case the best defence that the places will admit of must be made; and, to provide for such a contingency, let ten or twelve days' provision be kept in each post, and a supply of Ammunition equal to an expenditure of

forcements asked from Connecticut and Massachusetts. "Put everything in activity as far as may be in your power, and be well upon your guard. The movements of the enemy will probably be rapid, and a correspondent spirit of energy should animate our efforts." General Glover was ordered to Massachusetts and General Parsons to Connecticut, to urge forward the recruits. Knox was despatched to lay the urgency of the situation before Governor Livingston.

that time. I would not wish the officers to set fire to the Works, if upon any occasion they should be obliged to leave them; because they may perhaps be induced to quit them upon appearances seemingly well grounded, and therefore, if left intire, they may return to them when the Alarm is over. If the officers at present commanding at Stony and Verplanck's Points are men of discretion, it will be best to let them remain, with directions not to disclose their instructions to any person whatever; because, should the enemy obtain a knowledge of them, they might, by making feints, manœuvre them out of the posts. * * *

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD QUARTERS, SPRINGFIELD,
20 June, 1780.

SIR,

The Honorable the Committee will have informed Congress from time to time of the measures which have been judged essential to be adopted for coöperating with the Armament expected from France, and of their requisitions to the States in consequence. What the result of these has been, I cannot determine to my great anxiety, as no answers on the subjects of them have been yet received. The period is come when we have every reason to expect the Fleet will arrive and yet, for want of this point of primary consequence, it is impossible for me to form or fix on a system of coöperation. I have no basis to act upon—and of course were this generous succor

of our Ally now to arrive—I should find myself in the most awkward, embarrassing, and painful situation. The General and the Admiral from the relation in which I stand, as soon as they approach our coast, will require of me a plan of the measures to be pursued—and there ought of right to be one prepared; but circumstanced as I am I cannot even give them conjectures. From these considerations I have suggested to the Committee, by a letter I had the honor of addressing them yesterday,[1] the indispensable necessity of their writing again to the States, urging them to give immediate and precise information of

[1] "From the vast importance of the thing, I hoped that I should have been informed before this, of the measures which the several States meant to adopt, in consequence of your late requisitions; but, as I have not, I am certain you are unadvised yourselves, and have only to lament with you the delay. This is a point of primary consequence. We are now arrived at the period when we may momently expect the Fleet from France. For want of information it has been impossible for me to digest a System of coöperation. I have no data on which to proceed, and of course, were the Armament to come, I should find myself in the most delicate, embarrassing, and cruel situation. The French Commanders, from the relation in which I stand, the instant they reach our Coast will look to me for a plan of the measures to be pursued, and I ought of right to have one prepared; but I cannot even give them conjectures. The interest of the States, the reputation of their Councils, the justice and gratitude due to our Allies, a regard for my own Character, all demand, that I should without delay be enabled to ascertain and inform them what we can or cannot undertake.

"Besides, there is a point now to be determined, on which the success of all our future operations may turn, which, for want of knowing our prospects, I am altogether at a loss what to do in. To avoid involving the Fleet and Army of our allies in circumstances which, if not seconded by us, would expose them to material inconvenience and hazard, I shall be obliged to suspend a step, the delay of which may be fatal to our hopes. I therefore beg leave to suggest to the Committee the indispensable necessity of writing again to the different States, urging them to give immediate and precise information of the measures they have taken, the success they have had, and the probable result of them."—*Washington to the Committee of Coöperation*, 19 June, 1780.

the measures they have taken—and of the result. The interest of the States—the honor and reputation of our Councils—the justice and gratitude due our Allies—a regard to myself—all require that I should without delay, be enabled to ascertain and inform them what we can or cannot undertake. There is a point which ought now to be determined, on which the success of all our future operations may depend, which, for want of knowing our prospects, I am altogether at a loss what to do in. For fear of involving the Fleet and Army of our Allies in circumstances, which, if not seconded by us, would expose them to material inconvenience and hazard, I shall be compelled to suspend it, and the delay may be fatal to our hopes.

Besides the embarrassments I have mentioned above and upon former occasions—there is another of a very painful and humiliating nature. We have no shirts, from the best inquiries I can make, to distribute to the Troops, when the whole are in great want, and when a great part of them are absolutely destitute of any at all. Their situation too with respect to Summer overalls I fear is not likely to be much better. There are a good many on hand at Springfield it is said, but so indifferent in their quality, as to be scarcely worth the expence and trouble of transportation and delivery. For the Troops to be without cloathing at any time, is highly injurious to the service and distressing to our feelings; but the want will be more peculiarly mortifying when they come to act with those of our allies. If

it is possible I have no doubt immediate measures will be taken to relieve their distress. It is also most sincerely to be wished that there could be some supplies of Cloathing furnished for the officers. There are a great many whose condition is really miserable still and in some instances it is the case with almost whole State lines. It would be well for their own sakes—and for the Public good—if they could be furnished. When our Friends come to coöperate with us—they will not be able to go on the common routine of duty—and if they should, they must be held from their appearance, in low estimation.

I have been successively honored with your Excellency's favors of the 5th, 6th, 12th, 13th & 15th Insts. with their respective inclosures—The hurry of business has prevented my answering them sooner.—

I am unhappy to inform your Excellency, that a spirit of great dissatisfaction has prevailed of late among the Troops garrisoning Fort Schuyler; and that from my latest accounts from thence—it was far from having subsided when they were dispatched. The want of pay and of necessary Cloathing—particularly shirts, is assigned as the primary cause. Matters have been carried so far, as for thirty-one men to go off in a body for Oswagachee. They were pursued by Lieut. Hardenberg with a party of the Oneidas called in and detached for the purpose, and sixteen of them overtaken on the evening of the second day's pursuit, just as they were about crossing Grand River (15 having already passed it). A fire was immediately commenced by the whole party

against Mr. Hardenberg, who found himself under the necessity of returning it by which thirteen of the sixteen on this side were killed. The fifteen that had passed escaped. I mean if possible to relieve the garrison with a part of the men lately raised for frontier service in the State of New York, and have written to His Excellency Governor Clinton upon the subject—as I had done previous to the incursion made by Sir John Johnson, which at least rendered the measure impracticable for the time. I am in hopes by the 15th, that the hundred Barrels of flour which I ordered from Morris Town and forty Barrels of Beef arrived at Fort Schuyler, as they were under the care of a strong escort; and from the importance of the post and of having it tolerably secure on this head, during the Campaign, I have directed a Hundred Barrels more, both of Flour and Meat, to be forwarded to Albany immediately—to go under convoy of the intended relief for the Garrison. This quantity with the provision already there and such fresh Supplies as may be possibly collected in aid of the salt will, I trust, hold out till matters are in a Situation to admit of a further and seasonable supply—

In my letter of the 18th I advised Congress of the arrival of the Fleet from the Southward. I have since heard that both Sir Henry Clinton and Admiral Arbuthnot have returned. Accounts say they have brought a considerable part of the Southern Army with them. The Enemy remain in the same position at Elizabeth Town Point. Six of the Enemy's Ships

—one a frigate ran up the North River in sight of Verplancks point on the 18th, but they have fallen down again. I dont know the object they have in view in this maneuvre, or indeed of their present conduct; but if they have any designs against West point, a matter I have apprehended, I hope the precautions I have taken and am pursuing will defeat all their efforts. It is a misfortune that we have several important objects to attend to, and but a very small force with which to do it. However the best that can shall be done. I have, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, WHIPPANY,
25th June, 1780.

SIR,

Since I had the honor of addressing Congress on the 20th, the following movements have taken place on the part of the Enemy and on our part. The conduct of the Enemy and our intelligence giving us reason to suspect a design against West Point, on the 21st the army, except two Brigades and the Horse (left under the command of General Greene to cover the country and our stores,) was put in motion to proceed slowly towards Pompton. On the 22d it arrived at Rockaway Bridge, about eleven miles from Morris Town. The day following, the enemy moved in force from Elizabeth Town towards Springfield. They were opposed with great conduct and spirit by Major-Generals Greene and Dickinson, with the Continental Troops and such of the militia as were

assembled; but, with their superiority of numbers, they of course gained Springfield, burnt the Village, and retired the same day to their former position. In the night they abandoned it, crossed over to Staten Island, and took up their bridge. I beg leave to refer Congress to General Greene's report for particulars.

The Enemy advanced on this occasion with so serious an aspect, that we were compelled to act upon the supposition of their menacing our stores. A Brigade was detached to fall in with their right flank, and the army moved back towards Morris Town five or six miles, to be more in supporting distance. On receiving intelligence of the Enemy's withdrawing from the Point, all the Troops were put under marching orders for the North River; but the weather prevented them from commencing their march before this morning.

The late movements of the Enemy seem to have no satisfactory solution but an enterprise against West Point. Our last advices look strongly to the same object, yet there are many powerful reasons against it. But as we are now in a great degree rid of the incumbrance of our stores by the measures taken to remove them, prudence demands that our dispositions should be principally relative to West Point.[1] We shall do every thing in our power for its

[1] It will be seen by an extract from General Clinton's letter to Lord George Germaine relating to this subject, that, so far from having any design against West Point, his object was to seek a place of security where he could give rest to his troops, just returned from the fatigues of a southern campaign.

"I arrived in New York from the south," he wrote, "on the 17th of June, and found that General Knyphausen had made a move with the army into Jersey. At my arrival they were between Elizabethtown Creek and Newark.

security; and, in spite of the peculiar embarrassments of our situation, I hope not without success. The enemy have not made their incursions into this State without loss. Ours has been small. The militia deserve every thing that can be said on both occasions. They flew to arms universally, and acted with a spirit equal to any thing I have seen in the course of the war. With every sentiment of respect I have the honor to be, &c.[1] * * *

TO PRESIDENT REED.

HEAD-QUARTERS, WHIPPANY,
25 June, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

* * * * * *

I very much admire the patriotic spirit of the Ladies of Philada., and shall with great pleasure give them my advice, as to the application of their benev-

Washington's army was at Chatham, and an advanced corps at Connecticut Farms. In the present circumstances I could not think of keeping the field in Jersey. Washington's retreat gave me little time for deliberation. To avail myself, however, as much as I could, of our situation, I ordered, previously to quitting Jersey, a strong detachment under General Mathew, well supported by Knyphausen, to move to the last division of the rebel army and press it if possible, whilst I put the troops, just arrived from Carolina and already landed on Staten Island, afloat again, and repaired in person to Haverstraw Bay, the transports following me to Phillipsburg. I was thus in readiness to take advantage of any unguarded march the enemy might make to succor the corps attacked; or, finding no enemy for offence (as was the event), to land the troops and give a camp of rest to an army, of which many corps had had an uninterrupted campaign of fourteen months. The attack of the rear of Washington's army was conducted with judgment and spirit. The enemy were forced from two strong positions, and the troops, after remaining some hours in Springfield, retired according to my orders, and that evening without molestation evacuated Jersey, bringing off the bridge of boats, which had been thrown across the Staten Island Sound."—*MS. Letter*, July 4th.

[1] Read 27th. Referred to Committee of Intelligence.

olent and generous donation to the soldiers of the Army. Altho' the terms of the Association seem in some measure to preclude the purchase of any Article, which the public is bound to find, I would nevertheless recommend a provision of shirts, in preference to any thing else, in case the fund should amount to a sum equivalent to a supply of eight or ten thousand. The soldiery are exceedingly in want of them, and the public have never, for several years past, been able to procure a sufficient quantity to make them comfortable. They are, besides, more capable of an equal and satisfactory distribution than almost any other Article. Should the fund fall short of a supply of the number of shirts I have mentioned, perhaps there could be no better application of the money, than laying it out in the purchase of refreshments for the Hospitals. These are my ideas at present. When I have the pleasure of hearing more particularly from Mrs. Reed, I shall probably be able to form a more complete opinion.[1]

[1] This was in reply to a letter in which Mr. Reed had written: "The ladies have caught the happy contagion, and in a few days Mrs. Reed will have the honor of writing to you on the subject. It is expected she will have a sum equal to one hundred thousand pounds to be laid out according to your Excellency's direction, in such a way as may be thought most honorable and gratifying to the brave old soldiers, who have borne so great a share of the burden of this war. I thought it best to mention it in this way to your Excellency for your consideration, as it may tend to forward the benevolent scheme of the donors with despatch. I must observe, that the ladies have excepted such articles of necessity as clothing, which the States are bound to provide. We have just heard, that Mrs. Washington is on the road to this city, so that we shall have the benefit of her advice and assistance here, and if necessary refer afterwards to your Excellency."—*MS. Letter*, June 20th.

A further account of this contribution was communicated in a letter from Mrs. Reed to General Washington, in which she wrote as follows:

"The subscription set on foot by the ladies of this city for the use of the

I shall, agreeably to your Excellency's request, send down a few officers to take charge of and bring forward the drafts. As to the business of recruiting by voluntary enlistments, you may be assured, that its operation, if attended with any tolerable success in the end, will be too slow to answer our present purposes. I would therefore most earnestly recommend to you to place no dependence upon any such measure; but, by an immediate augmentation of drafts, supply the men required from Pennsylvania by the Committee of Congress. They make so considerable a part of the force estimated as necessary to give a probability of certainty to our expected operations, that they cannot be dispensed with.[1] Be kind enough to deliver the enclosed to Mrs. Washington. I am

soldiers is so far completed, as to induce me to transmit to your Excellency an account of the money I have received, which, although it has answered our expectations, does not equal our wishes. But I am persuaded it will be received as a proof of our zeal for the great cause of America, and of our esteem and gratitude for those, who so bravely defend it. The amount of the subscription is 200,580 dollars, and £625, 6*s*. 8*d*. in specie, which make in the whole in paper money 300,634 dollars. The ladies are anxious for the soldiers to receive the benefit of it, and wait your directions how it can best be disposed of. We expect considerable additions from the country; and I have also written to the other States in hopes that the ladies there will adopt a similar plan to render it more general and beneficial."—*Philadelphia*, July 4th.

The depreciation at this time was a little more than forty for one. Hence the actual amount subscribed in specie value was about seven thousand five hundred dollars.

The example was followed by ladies in New Jersey. Miss Mary Dagworthy wrote to the Commander-in-chief: "By order of Mrs. Dickinson and the other ladies of the committee, I have transmitted to your Excellency fifteen thousand four hundred and eighty-eight dollars, being the subscriptions received at this place, to be disposed of in such manner as your Excellency shall think proper for the benefit of the Continental soldiers. As the other subscriptions come in, they will be forwarded without delay."—*Trenton*, July 17th. This amount also is estimated in the depreciated currency.

[1] "I cannot forbear entreating your Excellency to give all your aid to the execution of the measures recommended by the Committee of Congress. I assure

infinitely obliged to your Excellency and to Mrs. Reed for your polite attention to her. I have the honor to be, &c.

you with the greatest sincerity that nothing short of them will answer our purpose, and that I am fully persuaded from a general view of European and American affairs, the fate of our cause depends on the exertions of this campaign. The sparing system has been too long tried by many of the States, 'till it has brought us to a crisis little less than desperate; and if the opportunity now before us be neglected, I fear it will be too late to retrieve our affairs. As I always speak to your Excellency in the confidence of friendship, I scruple not to confess, that the prevailing politics for a considerable time past have filled me with inexpressible anxiety and apprehension, and have uniformly appeared to me to threaten the subversion of our independence. Happy will it be if a period to them is now arrived, and a change of measures intervenes to save us from ruin."—*Washington to Governor Clinton*, 27 June, 1780. A similar letter was sent to Governor Trumbull.

The following particulars, contained in a letter from M. de la Luzerne to Count de Vergennes, afford an explanation of some of the opinions and motives, which at this time influenced both parties in the contest.

"After the taking of Charleston the English practised much greater moderation towards the inhabitants of the south, than they had done towards those of the middle and eastern States. Their plan was to sever the Carolinas and Georgia, and they seemed at this time to have abandoned the idea of reducing the northern States. They commenced publishing a gazette at Charleston, in which they circulated insinuations, that the northern States had abandoned the south, and that they were about to make an arrangement with England, which would exclude the Carolinas and Georgia. These attempts had an effect. The members of Congress are divided as to their interests and objects. Some are for using all efforts for rescuing the south. Others think the people there have shown too little zeal and activity in the cause, and that it is not expedient to put in jeopardy the safety of the north by rendering extraordinary aid to people, who are so indifferent about their own independence. One party speaks secretly of an expedition against Canada, another magnifies the difficulties of taking New York; one insists on an expedition to the south during the summer, and another is for a combined enterprise against Quebec. The British at the south talk of peace, and encourage the people to return to their former allegiance. It is possible that the British will make a proposition to the ten northern States tending to assure their independence; and their scheme will be to form into a new government the two Carolinas, Georgia, East Florida, and the Bahama Islands, which together would make a respectable possession."—*MS. Letter*, June 24th.

A letter from Mr. Duane in Congress to General Schuyler confirms in part the impressions above communicated. "That the reinforcements to the southward should be halted," said he, "is obvious for the reasons you assign. But

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON, IN CONGRESS.

RAMAPO, 29 June, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I have had the honor to receive your favor from Trenton, and thank you for the aid you have been pleased to afford in getting the provisions and stores removed from that place. Happily for us, the transportation is in a better train, and in greater forwardness, than I had reason a few days ago to expect it would be at this time. I am under no apprehension now of danger to the post at West Point, on the score either of provisions, the strength of the works, or of the garrison. I am sorry, however, to find there are apprehensions on account of the commandant, and that my knowledge of him does not enable me to form any decisive judgment of his fitness to command; but, as General McDougall and Baron Steuben, men of approved bravery, are both with him, and the main army is within supporting distance, I confess I have no fear on the ground of what I presume is suspected. To remove him, therefore, under these circumstances, and at this period, must be too severe a wound to the feelings of any officer, to be

do you expect such a proposition from a northern member, deeply interested in strengthening the main army? It is a question of the utmost delicacy and even danger; for, however groundlessly, an opinion has been propagated, that Congress means to sacrifice the two southernmost States, and it has been productive of the greatest animosity and discontent. We have privately stated the subject to some of the southern gentlemen, who, though I believe convinced of the propriety of the measure, did not choose, after great deliberation, to have it adopted, much less to propose it. There is but one person from whom it can originate with any prospect of success. If *we* had undertaken it, nothing would have resulted but disappointment and the loss of personal confidence."—*MS. Letter*, May 21st.—*Sparks.*

given but in cases of real necessity. When a general arrangement is gone into, and a disposition made for the campaign, I can with propriety, and certainly shall, bring him into the line of the army, and place the general you have named at that post, if the operations of the campaign are such as to render it expedient to leave an officer of his rank in that command.[1]

If the States mean to put the army in a condition to adopt any offensive plan, the period cannot be far off when this measure must take place. Your senti-

[1] Mr. Livingston had suggested his fears, that General Howe, in case of an exigency, would not inspire such a degree of confidence in the New York militia, as would be essential for engaging their efficient services. He solicited the appointment for General Arnold. "If I might presume so far," he said, "I should beg leave to submit to your Excellency, whether this post might not be safely confided to General Arnold, whose courage is undoubted, who is the favorite of our militia, and who will agree perfectly with our governor."—*MS. Letter*, June 22d.

Arnold had some time before written on the same subject to General Schuyler, who was then in camp as one of the committee from Congress. "I know not," said Arnold, "who is to have the command on the North River. If General Heath joins the army, as I am told he intends, that post will of course, I suppose, fall under his command. When I requested leave of absence from General Washington for the summer, it was under the idea, that it would be a very inactive campaign, and that my services would be of little consequence, as my wounds made it very painful for me to walk or ride. The prospect now seems to be altered, and there is a probability of an active campaign, in which, though attended with pain and difficulty, I wish to render my country every service in my power; and, by the advice of my friends, I am determined to join the army; with which I beg you will do me the favor to acquaint General Washington, that I may be included in any arrangement that may be made."—*MS. Letter*, May 25th.

The application, on the part of Mr. Livingston, was no doubt made at the request of General Arnold, who immediately afterwards visited the camp and West Point. On the 30th of June, General Howe wrote to General Washington from that post: "I have taken General Arnold round our works and he has my opinion of them, and of many other matters. I have long wished to give it to you, but I could not convey it by letter."

ments, my dear Sir, upon this occasion required no apology. The opinion and advice of friends I receive at all times as a proof of their friendship, and am thankful when they are offered. I am so well persuaded of the safety of West Point, the necessity of easing the militia as much as possible, and of husbanding our provisions and stores, that I have dismissed all the militia, that were called in for the defence of the posts on the North River. With the greatest esteem and regard, I have the honor to be, &c.

TO GOVERNOR WEARE.

RAMAPOUGH, 30 June, 1780.

SIR ;—

I send Brigadier General Stark to your state, to collect and forward the drafts for your battallions, and the levies for three months to the appointed place of rendezvous. The zeal, which the State of New Hampshire has always manifested gives me the fullest confidence, that they have complied with the requisitions of the committee of Congress in all their extent ; though we have not yet heard from thence what measures have been taken. This is the time for America, by one great exertion, to put an end to the war ; but for this purpose the necessary means must be furnished. The basis of every thing else is the completion of the continental battalions to their full establishment. If this is not done, I think it my duty to forewarn every state, that nothing decisive can be attempted, and that this campaign, like all the former, must be chiefly defensive. I am sorry to observe,

that some of the states have taken up the business on a less extensive scale. The consequences have been represented with candor and plainness, and I hope for the honor and safety of America, the representation may have the weight it deserves.

The drafts cannot be forwarded with too much expedition ; but as to the militia, under present appearances, I think it advisable to suspend the time fixed for their rendezvousing to the 25th of the next month, at which period, I shall be glad they may be without fail at the place appointed ; and it would be my wish, that they should come out under the command of General Stark.

I entreat your excellency to employ all your influence to give activity and vigor to the measures of your state. Every thing depends on the proper improvement of the present conjuncture ; we have every thing to hope on one side, and every thing to fear on the other. With perfect respect, &c.

P. S. The suspension of the period for assembling the militia, is founded on the French fleet not being arrived ; if this event should have taken place before this reaches your excellency, the suspension is not to have effect. The militia cannot be too soon at the place of rendezvous, after the fleet arrives.—

TO PRESIDENT REED.

HEAD-QUARTERS, BERGEN COUNTY,
4 July, 1780.

MY DEAR SIR,

Motives of friendship not less than of public good, induce me with freedom to give you my sentiments

on a matter, which interests you personally as well as the good of the common cause. I flatter myself you will receive what I say in the same spirit which dictates it, and that it will have all the influence circumstances will possibly permit.

The Legislature of Pennsylvania has vested you, in case of necessity, with a power of declaring Martial Law throughout the State, to enable you to take such measures as the exigency may demand. So far the Legislature has done its part. Europe, America, the State itself, will look to you for the rest. The power vested in you will admit of all the latitude, that could be desired, and may be made to mean any thing, the public safety may require. If it is not exerted proportionably, you will be responsible for the consequences. Nothing, my dear Sir, can be more delicate and critical than your situation; a full discretionary power lodged in your hands in conjunction with the Council; great expectations in our allies and in the People of this country; ample means in the State for great exertions of every kind; a powerful party on one hand to take advantage of every opening to prejudice you, on the other popular indolence and avarice, averse to every measure inconsistent with present ease and present interest. In this dilemma, there is a seeming danger whatever side you take; it remains to choose that, which has least real danger and will best promote the public weal. This in my opinion clearly is to exert the powers entrusted to you with a boldness and vigor suited to the emergency.

In general I esteem it a good maxim, that the best

way to preserve the confidence of the people durably is to promote their true interest. There are particular exigencies when this maxim has peculiar force. When any great object is in view, the popular mind is roused into expectation, and prepared to make sacrifices both of ease and property. If those, to whom they confide the management of their affairs, do not call them to make these sacrifices, and the object is not attained, or they are involved in the reproach of not having contributed as much as they ought to have done towards it, they will be mortified at the disappointment, they will feel the censure, and their resentment will rise against those, who, with sufficient authority, have omitted to do what their interest and their honor required. Extensive powers not exercised as far as was necessary have, I believe, scarcely ever failed to ruin the possessor. The Legislature and the People in your case, would be very glad to excuse themselves by condemning you. You would be assailed with blame from every quarter, and your enemies would triumph.

The party opposed to you in the Government are making great efforts. I am told the bank, established for supplying the army, is principally under the auspices of that party. It will undoubtedly give them great credit with the People, and you have no effectual way to counterbalance this, but by employing all your influence and authority to render services proportioned to your station. Hitherto I confess to you frankly, my dear Sir, I do not think your affairs are in the train which might be wished; and if Pennsyl-

vania does not do its part fully, it is of so much importance in the general scale, that we must fail of success, or limit our views to mere defence. I have conversed with some gentlemen on the measure of filling your battalions. They seemed to think you could not exceed what the Legislature had done for this purpose. I am of very different sentiment. The establishment of Martial Law implies, in my judgment, the right of calling any part of your citizens into military service, and in any manner which may be found expedient; and I have no doubt the draft may be executed.

I write to you with the freedom of friendship, and I hope you will esteem it the truest mark I could give you of it. In this view, whether you think my observations well founded or not, the motive will, I am persuaded, render them agreeable. In offering my respects to Mrs. Reed I must be permitted to accompany them with a tender of my very warm acknowledgments to her and you for the civilities and attention both of you have been pleased to show Mrs. Washington,—and for the honor you have done me in calling the young Christian by my name. With the greatest regard, I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO FIELDING LEWIS.

BERGEN COUNTY, JERSEY,
6 July, 1780.

* * * * * *

The Gazettes will have given you an account of the enemy's movements on the 7th and 23d of last month from Elizabethtown-point, and of their having

taken post there from the one date to the other; there can be no occasion therefore to detail the account in this place; but I may lament in the bitterness of my soul, that the fatal policy which has pervaded all our measures from the beginning of the war, and which no experience however dear bought can change, should have reduced our army to so low an ebb, as not to have given a more effectual opposition to those movements than we did; or that we should be obliged to be removing our stores from place to place to keep them out of the way of the enemy instead of driving that enemy from our country—but our weakness invited these insults, and why they did not *attempt at least* to do more than they did, I cannot conceive. Nor will it be easy to make any one at the distance of 400 miles believe that our army, weakened as it is by the expiration of men's enlistments, should at times be five or six days together without meat—then as many without bread—and once or twice, two or three days together without either—and that, in the same army, there should be numbers of men with scarcely as much cloathing as would cover their nakedness, and at least a fourth of the whole with not even the shadow of a blanket, severe as the winter has been. Under these circumstances it is no difficult matter to conceive what a time I must have had to keep up appearances and prevent the most disastrous consequences.

It may be asked how these things have come to pass? the answer is plain—and may be ascribed to the want of system, not to say foresight—originally (if it is not still the case with some) to a fatal jeal-

ousy (under our circumstances) of a standing army—by which means we neglected to obtain soldiers for the war when zeal and patriotism run high, and men were eager to engage for a trifle or for nothing; the consequence of which has been that we have protracted the war—expended millions and tens of millions of pounds which might have been saved, and have a new army to raise and discipline once or twice a year, and with which we can undertake nothing because we have nothing to build upon, as the men are slipping from us every day by means of their expiring enlistments. To these fundamental errors, may be added another which I expect will prove our ruin, and that is the relinquishment of Congressional powers to the States individually—all the business is now *attempted*, for it is not done, by a timid kind of recommendation from Congress to the States; the consequence of which is, that instead of pursuing one uniform system, which in the execution shall corrispond in time and manner, each State undertakes to determine—

1st. Whether they will comply or not.

2nd. In what manner they will do it, and

3d. In what time—by which means scarcely any one measure is, or can be executed, while great expences are incurred and the willing and zealous States ruined. In a word our measures are not under the influence and direction of one council, but thirteen, each of which is actuated by local views and politics, without considering the fatal consequences of not complying with plans which the united wisdom of America in its representative capacity have digested,

or the unhappy tendency of delay, mutilation or alteration. I do not scruple to add, and I give it decisively as my opinion—that unless the States will content themselves with a full and well-chosen representation in Congress and vest that body with absolute powers in all matters relative to the great purposes of war, and of general concern (by which the States unitedly are affected, reserving to themselves all matters of local and internal polity for the regulation of order and good government) we are attempting an impossibility, and very soon shall become (if it is not already the case) a many-headed monster—a heterogenious mass—that never will or can steer to the same point. The contest among the different States *now* is not which shall do most for the common cause—but which shall do least, hence arise disappointments and delay, one State waiting to see what another will or will not do, through fear of doing too much, and by their deliberations, alterations, and sometimes refusals to comply with the requisitions of Congress, after that Congress spent months in reconciling (as far as it is possible) jarring interests, in order to frame their resolutions, as far as the nature of the case will admit, upon principles of equality.

There is another source from whence much of our present distress, and past difficulties have flowed, and that is the hope and expectation which seizes the States, and Congress toward the close of every year, that Peace must take place in the Winter—This never fails to produce an apathy which lulls them into ease and security, and involves the most distressing conse-

quences at the opening of every campaign. We may rely upon it that we shall never have Peace till the enemy are convinced that we are in a condition to carry on the war. It is no new maxim in politics that for a nation to obtain Peace, or insure it, it must be prepared for war.

But it is time for me to recollect myself and quit a subject which would require a folio volume to illucidate, and expose the folly of our measures. To rectify past blunders is impossible, but we might profit by the experience of them, tho' even here I doubt, as I am furnished with many instances to the contrary. * * *

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEADQUARTERS, BERGEN COUNTY,
10 July, 1780.

SIR,

I have with great pleasure seen the very laudable association of the merchants of Philadelphia, for procuring a quantity of provisions and rum for the army. I am well persuaded that the same spirit exists in those of the other considerable trading towns, who perhaps only want being made acquainted with the distresses of the army, in articles almost as essential as those of provision, to produce similar associations for the purpose of providing such matters as may be recommended to them.

We are so scantily supplied with marquees, and tents, and have so little prospect of procuring a sufficient number by the common means, that some gen-

tlemen have suggested the propriety and expediency of an address to the merchants, from New London to Portsmouth inclusive, requesting their assistance at this critical time, and giving them the same assurances of reimbursement which have been given to the merchants of Philadelphia. By the estimates of the Quartermaster-General, a sum not exceeding forty thousand pounds lawful money, would make a sufficient provision for marquees, tents, knapsacks and some other articles in that way, and should the mode I have hinted be thought advisable, he would furnish the proportions which each town should, in his opinion, be requested to provide. Some private letters have, I believe, been written to the principal trading gentlemen to the eastward on this subject, which may perhaps produce an offer on their part; but I am so exceedingly anxious on account of the backward state of our preparations of every kind, that I cannot help recommending an application to them, notwithstanding, by Congress collectively, or through their own delegates, as may be judged most proper.

I observe that by the present regulations of the Bank of Philadelphia, the funds are to be applied solely to the purchases of rum and provision. But if an application of part of them could be diverted to the purchase of tents, (the materials for making which I am told are plenty in Philadelphia,) it would add to our stock in a very little time. The Committee of Co-operation have already recommended this deviation, and I beg leave to express my concurrence with them. I have the honor, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS NEAR PASSAIC,
10 July, 1780.

SIR,

I now beg leave to inform Congress that since my Letter of the 4th I have attended to their despatches of the 25th Ulto. by General Lincoln.

At this time I do not think, that the circumstances of the Campaign would admit at any rate an inquiry to be gone into respecting the loss of Charles Town; but, if it were otherwise, I do not see that it could be made, so as to be completely satisfactory either to General Lincoln or to the Public, without some gentlemen could be present, who have been acting in that quarter.[1] This, it seems, would be necessary on the occasion, and the more so, as I have not a single document or paper in my possession concerning the Department, by which the Court could be enabled to form a right conclusion in the case. Whenever the business can be undertaken, I should apprehend it will be requisite for the Court to have before them such papers as Congress may have respecting the Department, and a Copy of the Instructions and orders, they may have been pleased to give General Lincoln from time to time, and of their correspondence. And, besides the reasons against the inquiry at this time, General Lincoln being a prisoner of war, his situation it appears to me must preclude one supposing every other obstacle were out of the question, until he is exchanged. If Con-

[1] At General Lincoln's request, Congress had passed a resolve, directing the Commander-in-chief to cause an inquiry to be made concerning the loss of Charleston, and the conduct of General Lincoln while commanding in the Southern Department.

gress think proper, they will be pleased to transmit me such papers as they may have, which concern the matters of inquiry, that there may be no delay in proceeding in the business when other circumstances will permit.

With respect to an exchange of prisoners, I most earnestly wish that Congress, apprized of our affairs in the fullest manner, and of the prospects of the campaign, had been pleased to determine the point themselves. But as they have not done it, and they have thought proper to refer it to me, I cannot but observe, if motives of policy are ever to prevail over those of humanity, they seem to apply at present against a general exchange. As to officers, their Exchange either on the principle of equal rank, or of composition, where that will not apply, confining the exchange on that of composition for *officers only*, is favored both by policy and humanity, and therefore in every point of light it is to be desired; and there is now a negotiation on foot between us and the Enemy in consequence of a late proposition from them for the exchange of all their officers, who are prisoners of war, and for such of those of the Convention (Generals Phillips, Riedesel, and their families excepted), as are in New York on parole, for an equal number of ours of their rank and in order of their captivity; which, if carried into effect, will give relief to a few. But the exchange of privates, though strongly urged by humanity, would certainly be against us in a political view. It would throw into the Enemy's hands a very respectable permanent augmentation to their present force, already great, while

it would add but inconsiderably to ours, as no small proportion of the Men, we should receive, would not belong to the Army, and many who should at the time, would probably be soon released from it by the expiration of their Enlistments. This is one among the innumerable ill consequences that result from short enlistments. Indeed, if the case were otherwise, and the whole of the privates, the Enemy have to exchange, were enlisted for the war, the advantages derived from an Exchange would not be equal at this time. These would be on the side of the Enemy, on the supposition that offensive operations will be prosecuted on our part, as every Man given them would in such case be equal to two received by us on the lowest scale of calculation. These considerations seem to make the release of the privates ineligible for the present; but Congress will decide themselves with respect to the business. If they think that their exchange should be deferred, or if we should not be able to effect that of the officers, I should hope every exertion, which our circumstances will authorize, will be made to render their situation easy and comfortable. They have a claim to this, and nothing in our power should be omitted to effect it.[1]

[1] When this letter was considered in Congress, a resolve was passed, "That General Washington be authorized to effectuate an exchange of officers, either on the footing of equal rank, or on composition, or both, as the cases may respectively require, confining the exchange on that of composition to officers only, and having due regard to the order of captivity; such exchange to be rendered as extensive as possible in its execution, so as not only to include, on the part of the enemy, prisoners of war, but also the officers of the convention troops, now on parole at New York."—*Journals*, August 7th.

General Lincoln informed me, when he arrived here, that, from some correspondence which had passed between him and Sir Henry Clinton, he hoped his exchange might be effected for one of the major-generals of the Convention ; and for this purpose he wrote to him just before his departure for Boston with my approbation. The proposition falls within the principle of equality of rank, by which exchanges between us hitherto have been governed ; and his release will not be injurious to the claims of any other officer of ours in captivity, and therefore it appeared to me not objectionable. I hope it will be considered in the same light by Congress. I have the honor to be, &c.

P. S. I forgot to mention above that one of the Enemy's late propositions extends to an exchange of the Privates in New York—This I could not effect in the severe weather in the beginning of February but a change of circumstances has since disposed them to think it expedient and to make the offer. They affect to place it on the mere footing of humanity.[1]

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE, QUARTERMASTER-GENERAL.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 14 July, 1780.

SIR,

I have determined upon a plan of operations for the reduction of the City and Garrison of New York, which is to be carried on in conjunction with the

[1] Read in Congress July 17th. Referred to Bee, Lovell, and Scott.

french forces dayly expected from France. The number of Troops to be employed upon this occasion may be about forty thousand men. You are hereby directed, therefore, to make every necessary arrangement and provision in your Department for carrying the plan of operations into execution. You will apply to the States for what they are bound to furnish, agreeable to the several requisitions of Congress and their Committee at Camp. All such articles as the States are not bound to furnish, which will be necessary to go on with the operations, you will provide; and for this purpose you will apply to the Treasury board for the requisite supplies of Cash.

I have been in anxious expectation, that some plan would be determin'd for your Department; but, as it has not hitherto taken place, and as it is impossible to delay its operations a moment longer, waiting for such a plan, I am to desire, you will yourself arrange it in some effectual manner, to give despatch and efficacy to your measures equal to the exigency. Your knowledge and experience in the business will be sufficient to direct your conduct, without going into more particular instructions. It is my wish, your provisions should be ample, as nothing is more fatal to military operations, than a deficiency in the great Departments of the Army, and particularly in yours, which will be the hinge on which the whole enterprise must turn. The Honble. the Committee of Congress, in their applications to the States, have requested them to deliver the supplies raised, at such places as the Quartrmastr.-Genl. and the Commisy.-

General should point out for the Articles in their respective departments. The committee informed me, that they had given you and Colonel Blaine information on this Head. But, if any thing remains to be done, you will immediately do it; and I should be glad, that you would see the commissary, Mr. Blaine, if present; if not, Mr. Stewart, to concert the arrangement with him.

I am informed, that there is at Albany a quantity of Plank and Timber, sufficient for constructing about forty Batteaux, which may be procured. If you have not a sufficiency of Boats, you will endeavour to procure the abovementioned plank and timber. General Schuyler will give you more particular information. I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, BERGEN COUNTY,
14 July, 1780.

SIR,

I have the honor to inform Congress, that I have this moment received a letter from Major General Heath, dated Providence on the 11th, informing that the afternoon of the 10th the French fleet arrived off Newport, that the signals of recognizance had been made, and the fleet was standing into the harbor when the express came away. I congratulate Congress on this important event, and entreat them to press every measure in their power to put us, as soon as possible, in a Condition to begin the intended co-operation with vigor and efficacy.

I enclose a plan, which, in conjunction with the Inspector-General I have framed for the consideration of Congress. It is indispensable the department should be put in full activity without loss of time. The speedier the decision, the better. A large additional allowance, at least nominally, for the Inspectors is proposed, but it is a very imperfect compensation for the additional trouble; and, unless some extra privileges and emoluments attend the office, it will not be undertaken by officers of rank and abilities.

I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

INSTRUCTIONS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 15 July, 1780.

The Marquis de Lafayette will be pleased to communicate the following general ideas to Count de Rochambeau and Chevalier de Ternay, as the sentiments of the underwritten.

[1] Read in Congress, July 17th.

"It cannot be too much lamented that our preparations are still so greatly behind-hand. Not a thousand men that I have heard of have yet joined the army; and in all probability the period for commencing our operations is at hand. I am happy to learn that a spirit of animation has diffused itself throughout the States, from which we may expect the happiest consequences. But the exigency is so pressing that we ought to multiply our efforts to give new activity and despatch to our measures, levying and forwarding the men, providing the supplies of every sort required: forage and transportation demand particular attention. After what had been preconcerted with the Honorable the Congress, after two months previous notice of the intended succor; if our allies find us unprepared, and are obliged to wait several weeks in a state of inaction, it is easy to conceive how unfavorable the impressions it will make of our conduct. Besides this, the season is exceedingly advanced, a decisive enterprise, if our means are equal to it, will not permit us to lose a moment of the time left for military operations, which, if improved with all the vigor in our power, is less than were to be wished for an undertaking of so arduous and important a nature. So much is at stake—so much to be hoped—so much to be lost—that we shall be inexcusable, if we do not employ all our zeal and all our exertion."—*Washington to the Committee of Co-operation*, 13 July, 1780.

1. In any operation, and under all circumstances, a decisive naval superiority is to be considered as a fundamental principle, and the basis upon which every hope of success must ultimately depend.[1]

2. The advantages of possessing the port of New York, by the squadron of France, have been already enumerated to Count de Rochambeau and Chevalier de Ternay, and are so obvious, as not to need recapitulation. A delay in the execution of this enterprise may defeat all our projects, and render the campaign inactive and inglorious.

3. To render our operations nervous and rapid, it is essential for us to be masters of the navigation of the North River and of the Sound. Without this, our land transportation will be great, our expenses enormous, and our progress slow if not precarious for want of forage and other means.

4. With these ideas, and upon this ground, it is conceived that many advantages will result from the French squadron's taking possession of the inner harbor between Staten Island and the city of New York, and detaching a frigate or two above the

[1] "You have totally misconceived my meaning, if you think I have or shall relinquish the idea of an enterprise against New York, till it shall appear obviously impracticable, from the want of force or means to operate. I have not as yet relaxed in any preparation tending to this end; nor shall I, till I am convinced of the futility of the measure. I would, by all means, have it understood as my wish, that the French squadron, if superior to Arbuthnot's since the junction, should take a station, while it can do it with safety, off Sandy Hook. This, and our exertions in the mean while, will demonstrate, long before the equinoctial gales, to what we are competent.

"What I had in view, by discouraging the first draft of the letter to the French general and admiral, was, first, with our ignorance of their strength, I thought we ought not to give them more than the information of Graves's arrival; and, secondly, not to hold up strong ideas of success, which probably would not be warranted by the issue; because I never wish to promise more than I have a moral certainty of performing."—*Washington to the Marquis de Lafayette*, 16 July, 1780.

The New York paper of the 14th announced the arrival of Admiral Graves on the 13th with a "formidable squadron" to reinforce Admiral Arbuthnot. From private information Washington learned that this squadron consisted of six vessels, the London (90 guns), Resolution (74), Bedford (74), Royal Oak (74), Prudent (64) and America (60). This gave the English a greater naval force than the French possessed.

chevaux-de-frise in the North River opposite Fort Washington, for the purpose of opening the navigation of the River, shortening the transportation by land on the upper and lower communication, and bringing the enemy to an explanation respecting Staten Island. Shipping so near the town would, at the same time they cover the frigates in the North River, keep the garrison in check, and be more likely to facilitate other movements of the army, than if they were to remain at the Hook or below the Narrows.

5. Our operations against the enemy in the city of New York may commence from either of three points, to wit, Morrisania, or the height near Kingsbridge, or Staten Island. Each has its advantages and disadvantages, but, under a full view of all circumstances, the preponderancy is in favor of Morrisania; especially since the aid of his Most Christian Majesty has come by the way of Rhode Island, instead of Cape Henry, as it was expected they would do, and touch at Sandy Hook, in consequence of advices lodged there.

6. As the means for carrying on our operations are not yet sufficiently appreciated, nor is the time by which our aids will arrive sufficiently ascertained, it is impossible to be precise as to the time the American troops can with safety rendezvous at Morrisania; but, as it is necessary to fix some epoch, it is hoped that it may happen by the 5th of August. I would propose that day for the reëmbarkation of the French efficient force at New London (if they should have come there), and that they proceed up the Sound to Whitestone on Long Island, or to such other place on that Island, or on the main, as circumstances may require, and the Count shall be advised of. For, the operations against the enemy depending very much upon their holding all or dismantling some of their present posts, and upon contingencies on our side, it is not possible at this time to mark out a precise plan, or determine whether our approaches to the city of New York shall be by the way of York Island, Brooklyn, or both. Numbers must determine the latter, and circumstances of the moment the former.

7. It must be clearly understood and agreed between the parties, that, if any capital operation is undertaken, the French

fleet and land forces will at all events continue their aid until the success of the enterprise, or until it is mutually determined to abandon it.

8. In all matters of arrangement and accommodation, not repugnant to the foregoing ideas, the Marquis, in behalf of the United States, will consult the convenience and wishes of the Count and Chevalier, and will be pleased to assure them of the disposition I possess to make every thing as agreeable to them as possible, and of my desire to manifest on all occasions the high sense I entertain of their merit, and the generous aid they have brought to us.

TO COUNT DE ROCHAMBEAU.

HEAD-QUARTERS, NEW JERSEY,
16 July, 1780.

SIR,

I hasten to impart to you the happiness I feel at the welcome news of your arrival; and, as well in the name of the American army, as in my own, to present you with an assurance of our warmest sentiments for allies, who have so generously come to our aid. As a citizen of the United States, and as a soldier in the cause of liberty, I thankfully acknowledge this new mark of friendship from his Most Christian Majesty, and I feel a most grateful sensibility for the flattering confidence he has been pleased to honor me with on this occasion.

Among the obligations we are under to your Prince, I esteem it one of the first, that he has made choice, for the command of his troops, of a Gentleman whose high reputation and happy union of social qualities and military abilities promise me every public advantage and private satisfaction. I beg, Sir,

that you will be the interpreter of my sentiments to the Gentlemen under your command. Be pleased to assure them, that, to the pleasure I anticipate of an acquaintance with them, I join the warmest desire to do every thing that may be agreeable to them and to the soldiers under their command. But in the midst of a war, the nature and difficulties of which are peculiar and uncommon, I cannot flatter myself in any way to recompense the sacrifices they have made, but by giving them such opportunities in the field of glory, as will enable them to display that gallantry and those talents, which we shall always be happy to acknowledge with applause.

The Marquis de Lafayette has been by me desired from time to time to communicate such intelligence, and make such propositions, as circumstances dictated. I think it so important, immediately to fix our plan of operations, and with as much secrecy as possible, that I have requested him to go himself to New London, where he will probably meet you. As a General officer, I have the greatest confidence in him ; as a friend, he is perfectly acquainted with my sentiments and opinions. He knows all the circumstances of our army and the country at large. All the information he gives, and all the propositions he makes, I entreat you will consider as coming from me. I request you will settle all arrangements whatsoever with him ; and I shall only add, that I shall exactly conform to the intentions of his Most Christian Majesty, as explained in the several papers put into my hands by his order, and signed by his ministers.

Permit me to refer you to the Marquis de Lafayette for more particular assurances of what I feel on this occasion, which I the more readily do, from a knowledge of his peculiar affection and regard for you. Impatiently waiting for the time when our operations will afford me the pleasure of a personal acquaintance with you, I have the honor to be, with the most perfect consideration, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE.

HEAD-QUARTERS, BERGEN COUNTY,
19 July, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

By despatches recd. the last evening from the Count de Rochambeau, I am informed, that the French Fleet and Army, consisting of eight ships of the Line, two Frigates, and two Bombs, and upwards of five thousand men, have arrived at Newport.[1] This

[1] Letters were also received from General Heath. "I arrived here last night," said he, "and this morning I had the honor of congratulating M. de Rochambeau and M. de Ternay on their safe arrival. The inhabitants appear disposed to treat our allies with much respect. The town, by a vote of the inhabitants, is to be illuminated this evening. I am myself charmed with the officers. Count de Rochambeau has desired me to publish an advertisement inviting the inhabitants to bring small meats, vegetables, and the like, to market, and that they shall receive hard money in payment. This the Count intended with a good view to our currency. I have told him it would have a different effect. I shall therefore only assure the farmers, that they will receive a handsome price."—Newport, July 12th.

Again: "The French troops are landed, and encamped in a fine situation south-east of the town, and extend nearly across the Island. They make a good appearance. The legion under the command of the Duke de Lauzun, the officer who took Senegal last year, is as fine a corps as I have ever seen. It is about six hundred strong. The officers express the highest satisfaction with the treatment they receive. The markets are become very good, and great regularity is preserved. In short, hitherto every thing appears agreeable and satisfactory."—July 16th.

makes them rather inferior to the combined naval force of Arbuthnot and Graves; but, as a second division of ships and Land Forces (a circumstance you will keep to yourself) may be expected in a few weeks, it is probable we shall gain a superiority at sea by the time we can be ready to operate, as Count de Rochambeau is of opinion, that his land force will not be sufficiently recruited under four Weeks from the 12th instant. Should a superiority at Sea be established, it would lessen our land transportation in so considerable a degree, that little or no doubt would remain of our being able to keep up the requisite supply of provisions, Forage, and Military stores, during the time of an operation against New York. But, as that is a matter which cannot be ascertained, and as New York seems, for reasons which have presented themselves since the arrival of the Fleet, to be the only object we can attempt, it remains to be considered whether it will be possible to maintain an Army proportioned to such an undertaking, when wholly dependent upon a land transportation, aided by a contingent one by the way of the Sound.

In making your estimates, you are to observe, that the Directors of the Bank of Philadelphia engage to deliver upwards of two months' supply of Flour for the American Army in the Camp, if so ordered; and, as we have little reason to doubt the Abilities and activity of these Gentlemen, we may with tolerable safety count upon so considerable an aid. Meat will chiefly be brought to us on foot. The matter, then, for which we shall be principally apprehensive,

will be the transportation of Forage and Military Stores. To insure this, there are but three ways : a competent sum of money to pay the hire of the teams upon performing the service ; the exertion of the States to draw them out upon requisition ; or Military coercion in case of extremity. Upon the first, deranged as our finances are, we ought to place but little dependence. On the second, you can as well judge as myself from the present temper of the States, and what they are actually doing. And, although the third method is a disagreeable one, yet I shall not hesitate, if the resources of the country are equal to it, to execute it to the utmost of our means, if the attainment of so great an object, as that which is now before us, is made to depend upon it. With this assurance, I beg to know candidly your opinion of the probable practicability of supporting the operation so far as it depends on transportation. While we do not underrate difficulties on one hand, we should not overrate them on the other ; nor discourage ourselves from a very important undertaking by obstacles, which are to be surmounted. I am, &c.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 22 July, 1780.

I have received, My Dear Marquis, your letter enclosing me those you had received from Count de Rochambeau and the Chevalier de Ternay. As I speak to you in confidence, I am sorry to find that the objections made by M. de Ternay are of a nature

to prevent his entering the harbor, notwithstanding any superiority he will probably have. I certainly would not wish him to endanger his fleet in any enterprise not warranted by prudence, and by a sufficient prospect of success and security; and I shall acquiesce in his better judgment of Maritime Affairs. But I should hope, whenever he shall have a decided superiority, he may possess the port; and certainly, without this, our operations must be infinitely more precarious, and in success much less decisive.[1]

Another thing that gives me concern is the non-arrival of our arms and powder. Of the former we have not one half a sufficiency for our recruits, and in the latter, (including the quantity expected,) we were defective. Unless, therefore, our allies can lend us largely, we certainly can attempt nothing. With every effort we can make, we shall fall short at least four or five thousand arms, and two hundred tons of powder. We must of necessity, my Dear Marquis, however painful it is to abuse the generosity of our friends, know of them whether they can assist us with a loan of that quantity of arms and ammunition. I

[1] Alluding to the harbor of New York. The Chevalier de Ternay declined attempting to pass Sandy Hook, in any event, being convinced, as he said, by the experience of Count d'Estaing, and by such charts as he had examined, that such an attempt with his large ships would be extremely hazardous. "I have therefore concluded," he wrote, "that, if it is possible to sustain the fleet at Long Island without entering the Hook, this arrangement will be preferable on all accounts. I will combat the English squadron at sea, should it attempt to oppose the passage of troops. All my vessels are actually without water. I have landed thirteen hundred men sick. It was with difficulty that I was enabled to supply the wants of the frigates, which I despatched yesterday to endeavor to intercept some of the enemy's vessels."—*MS. Letter to Lafayette*, July 16th.

do not believe we can make out with less; but, before we can enter into any engagements, we must ascertain what they will be able to spare us. I entreat you to speak to the Count on this subject without delay, and let me know the result by express. If the arms can be obtained, endeavor to have them forwarded as quick as possible, to put into the hands of the recruits, that we may be training them a little, and putting them in condition to act.

With respect to the Count's desire of a personal interview with me, you are sensible, my dear Marquis, that there is nothing I should more ardently desire than to meet him; but you are also sensible, that my presence here is essential to keep our preparations in activity, or even going on at all. I entreat you to impress the Count with a proper idea of this matter, and convince him with what pleasure I should hasten to meet him, if it would not be injurious to our affairs. I should have anticipated his wishes. I am persuaded, my dear Marquis, that, however ardent may be your wishes to undertake the reduction of a certain place, you will not fail to take a candid and full view of the difficulties. We owe it to our allies. We owe it to ourselves.[1]

[1] *From the Orderly Book.*—"The Commander-in-chief has the pleasure to congratulate the army on the arrival of a large land and naval armament at Rhode Island, sent by his Most Christian Majesty to co-operate with the troops of these States against the common enemy, accompanied with every circumstance that can render it honorable and useful. The generosity of this succor, and the manner in which it is given, is a new tie between France and America. The lively concern, which our allies manifest for our safety and independence, has a claim to the affection of every virtuous citizen. The General with confidence assures the army, that the officers and men of the French forces come

Colonel Hamilton informed you yesterday of the advices received from New York of an intended embarkation, said to be destined for Rhode Island. Major Lee in a letter of the 20th tells me the English fleet have returned to the Hook. Assure the Count and the Chevalier of all the esteem and attachment I feel for them, and receive the assurances of the affection with which I am, dear Marquis, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, PREAKNESS,
22 July, 1780.

SIR,

The committee has done me the honor to communicate a copy of their letter of the 18th to Congress, containing a state of the measures they had taken, and of our present prospects. The knowledge I have of facts perfectly coincides with their representation; and the consequences they draw are so just and important, that they ought to engage, and I am persuaded will engage, the closest attention of Congress. I think it my duty to add, that, pressed on all sides by a choice of difficulties, in a moment which required decision, I have adopted that line of conduct, which suited the dignity and faith of Congress,

to our aid, animated with a zeal founded in sentiment for us, as well as in duty to their prince, and that they will do every thing in their power to promote harmony and cultivate friendship. He is equally persuaded, that on our part we shall vie with them in their good dispositions, to which we are excited by gratitude as well as by a common interest; and that the only contention between the two armies will be to excel each other in good offices, and in the display of military virtue. This will be the pledge of the most solid advantages to the common cause, and of a glorious issue to the campaign."—July 20th.

the reputation of these States, and the honor of our arms. I have sent on definite proposals of coöperation to the French general and admiral. Neither period of the Season, nor a regard to decency, would permit delay. The die is cast, and it remains with the States either to fulfil their engagements, preserve their credit, and support their independence, or to involve us in disgrace and defeat. Notwithstanding the failures pointed out by the Committee, I shall proceed, on the supposition that they will ultimately consult their own interest and honor, and not suffer us to fail for want of means, which it is evidently in their power to afford. What has been done, and is doing, by some of the States, confirms the opinion I have entertained of sufficient resources in the country;—of the disposition of the People to submit to any arrangement for bringing them forth, I see no reasonable ground to doubt. If we fail for want of proper exertions in any of the Governments, I trust the responsibility will fall where it ought, and that I shall stand justified to Congress, to my country, and to the world.

From misconception or some other cause, there seems to have been not sufficient attention to the articles of Transportation and forage, which must be the pivot of our operations.—Few of the States as far as I am informed have yet put this important particular on a footing equal to the exigency—Several have agreed to furnish the horses and waggons demanded for the field-Service of the Army: but have not provided means to transport the Provisions

—Artillery Stores—Arms—cloathing—&c., for the use of the Expedition without which it must evidently be obstructed in its very first Stage.

Congress are sensible, that I have made it a rule to speak with the most scrupulous delicacy of the measures of the States, generally or particularly, and will do me the justice to believe, that the plainness of my present remarks is dictated by a sense of duty, by the importance of the conjuncture, and by the necessity of giving them a just view of our situation. I beg leave to observe, that, from present appearances, it seems to me indispensable, that Congress should enlarge the Powers of their Committee. We have every reason to believe it will become unavoidable to exert powers, which, if they have no sanction, may be very disagreeable to the people, and productive of discontents and oppositions, which will be infinitely injurious. With perfect respect and esteem, I am &c.[1]

TO JOSEPH JONES.

HEAD QUARTERS, BERGEN COUNTY,
22 July, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

Your favor of the 18th came to my hands last night—considering the delicate situation in which I stand with respect to General Gates, I feel an unwillingness to give any opinion (even in a confidential way) in a matter in which he is concerned, lest my sentiments (being known) should have unfavorable

[1] Read in Congress July 31st. Referred to Adams, McKean, Sherman, Laurens, and Clark.

interpretations ascribed to them by illiberal Minds—I will however state facts, and leave you to draw inferences, with respect to the promotion required.

Custom (for I do not recollect any resolve of Congress authorizing it) has established a kind of right to the promotion of Brigadiers in State lines (where there are Regiments enough to require a Brigr. to command)—There can be no objection therefore to the Gentn. named, on this ground.[1]

By the practice of our Army, never less than four Regiments are placed in a Brigade, but in cases of necessity.—The quota of Regiments allotted to the State of Virginia originally were 15— In the year 1778 there was an incorporation of some of them by the Committee of arrangement (sent to the White Plains); and approved, to the best of my recollection by Congress—This reduced them to ; one of which is now at Fort Pitt.—

The State of Virginia at this time (since the recall of Weedon) has four Brigadiers in pay, and two in active Service—Those in captivity will be injured if they should not return to actual command when they are exchanged; and they can have no command out of their own line,—nor can there be any in it if new B— are made.

The State was about to raise 5,000 Men, 4,000 of which is, more than probable as many as they will get—and were I to form my judgment from our usual disappointments, and the customary deficiency in these cases, I should not expect 3,000 Men.—

[1] Col. Daniel Morgan. See *Journals of Congress*, 13 October, 1780.

At the request of Govr. Jefferson, and from a list of the officers of the Virga. Line (not in captivity), I have made a temporary formation of these Troops into Six (or as the case may be) Seven Regiments, till they are surcharged—there being officers enough in the State for this purpose.

The case of S——ns [1] is not singular, it frequently happens—and in the nature of things must happen, while we depend upon Militia ; and the appointment of officers of his Rank are in the Executive of each State.—I have no doubt but that several instances of this kind will occur under my immediate command in the course of the Campaign (if our intended operation goes forward)—It is unavoidable, while we depend upon Militia for field Service.

The Gentmn. who is the subject of your Letter is a brave officer, and well meaning man, but his withdrawing from Service at the time he did last year, could not be justified on any ground—there was not, to my knowledge, the smallest cause for dissatisfaction—and the season and circumstances were totally opposed to the measure even if cause had existed, till matters assumed a different aspect than they were at the time of his proffered resignation.—

From this state of facts, which I believe to be candid and impartial, you will judge of the propriety, or impropriety of the promotion in question, and act accordingly.—

If any letter of mine to Col. Harrison (Speaker to the Virginia House of Delegates) could have a tendency to injure rather than promote the service

[1] Stephens.

in which we are engaged, the operation of it, and my intention, are as far apart as the North pole is from the South.—

In May, after the Marquis' arrival with assurances of speedy succor from France, I wrote to Col. Harrison (which I had not done for many months before) and informed him knowing the Assembly was then sitting—of the totally deranged situation of our affairs—of our distresses—of the utter impracticability of availing ourselves of this generous aid, unless the States would rouse from the Torpor that seized them, and observed, that * * * [1]

If there is anything in the foregoing quotations of my Letter to Col. Harrison that could prejudice the Service, I must abide the consequences, for I certainly wrote what is recited— Not officially as you will readily perceive, but in a private letter to a friend, whose influence, together with that of every wellwisher to the cause I wanted to engage, as I thought it high time that every Engine should be at work.— The whole of what I wrote on the points you mentioned, are faithfully transcribed, that you may judge how far it could prejudice the Service—

With the greatest esteem and regard, &c.

P. S. The latter clause of the quotations of my letter to Col. Harrison I am not *absolutely certain* was sent.—The original draught contained it, but I am in some doubt whether it was copied or not,— This I mention that there may be no possible mis-information on my part.—

[1] See note p. 297 *ante*.

TO SIR HENRY CLINTON.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 26 July, 1780.

SIR,

I have been duly honored with your Excellency's letter of the 19th instant, and am pleased to find, that the proposition I had the honor of communicating to General Knyphausen, and afterwards to your Excellency, on the 5th of this month, for mutually appointing agents for prisoners, has met your approbation. I should have been happy, if you had in your letter delineated your ideas of the powers and restrictions, under which they are to act; but, as you have not done it, I beg leave to offer the enclosed propositions on this head for your consideration, and to request your answer to them as soon as it may be convenient, with any additional ones your Excellency may think proper to subjoin. It will be perfectly agreeable for the agent, that shall be appointed on your part, to reside at Lancaster, as your Excellency has proposed, which will also be made the place of confinement for the privates, prisoners of war in our hands, so far as circumstances will reasonably permit.

Your Excellency's despatches on the subject of the troops of convention, have been received. I am exceedingly obliged by the favorable sentiments you are pleased to entertain of my disposition towards prisoners; and I beg leave to assure you, Sir, that I am sensible of the treatment, which those under your direction have generally experienced. There is nothing more contrary to my wishes, than that men

in captivity should suffer the least unnecessary severity or want; and I shall take immediate occasion to transmit a copy of the report you enclose (the truth of which I can neither deny nor admit) to the commandant at Charlottesville, with orders to inquire into the facts, and to redress grievances wherever they may exist. At the same time, that I will not pretend to controvert the justice of the matters complained of by Mr. Hoakesley (the report transmitted being the first and only communication I have had with respect to them), I cannot but think the terms of General Phillips's letter to your Excellency rather exceptionable, and that this gentleman's own experience and good understanding should have led to a more favorable and just interpretation, than the one he has been pleased to make upon the occasion. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

HEAD-QUARTERS, PREAKNESS,
27 July, 1780.

I have received your letter of the 22d, from Hartford. I perceive, my dear Marquis, you are determined at all events to take New York, and that

[1] Mr. Hoakesley, wagon-master to the British army which capitulated at Saratoga, had lately returned to New York from Charlottesville, and reported that the prisoners were not properly supplied with provisions. General Phillips, in representing the matter to Sir Henry Clinton, used the following language: "Such severities and hardships upon the troops of convention will force them to disperse and desert, and in doing so to cease from abiding by the treaty of Saratoga, which the Americans perhaps wish to have dissolved. By this starving, as it were, the troops of convention, they are driven to seek

obstacles only increase your zeal. I am sorry that our prospects, instead of brightening, grow duller. I have already written to you on the subject of arms. There is no probability of our getting the number we want from the States; so that, without the timely arrival of those we expect, or the assistance of our allies, this alone will prove an insuperable obstacle. Our levies come in even slower than I expected; though we have still an abundance of fair promises, and some earnest of performance from the eastern States. Pennsylvania has given us not quite four hundred, and seems to think she has done admirably well. Jersey has given us fifty or sixty. But I do not despair of Jersey.

Mr. Clinton still continues to threaten your countrymen with a combined attack. You will judge, as well as, of the probability of his being sincere; but I have put the troops here under marching orders, and have ordered those at West Point to King's Ferry. If Clinton moves in force to Rhode Island, we may possibly be able to take advantage of it; or we may embarrass him a little and precipitate his movements. In this case, there are only two things, that would hinder us from taking New York before your return, the want of men and arms to do it with. If this letter should not meet you on your way back, a visit

refuge in the country, or, by deserting, to become prisoners of war, under the supposition that, in detached and scattered parties, they may be able to procure provisions, which seem to be denied them in a collected body." A copy of the letter containing these words was enclosed to General Washington by Sir Henry Clinton, who added: "You cannot but be informed, Sir, that our conduct towards your prisoners here is humane and liberal, and I am persuaded your wish must be to maintain this system of benevolence towards men, who have the misfortune of enduring captivity."—July 19th.

from you to the Council of Massachusetts may have a good effect. Urge the absolute necessity of giving us their full complement of men, and of doing every thing else that has been asked of them. Dwell upon the articles of arms and ammunition. With the truest affection, I remain, my dear Marquis, your assured friend, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

PARAMUS, 30 July, 1780.

SIR,

The Honorable the Committee address Congress by this opportunity to inform them of the most disagreeable crisis; to which our affairs are brought in the Quarter Master-General's department. I think it my duty to assure Congress, that I entirely agree with the Committee in opinion, and that, unless effectual measures are immediately taken to induce General Greene and the other principal officers of the department to continue their services, there must of necessity be a total stagnation of military business. We not only must cease from the preparations for the campaign, but shall in all probability be obliged to disperse, if not disband the army, for want of subsistence.

With every effort it will be possible for us to make, embarrassed as we are on every side, it will be extremely difficult, if not impracticable, to keep the great departments of the army in motion. Any interruption, therefore, in addition to what arises from the present posture of affairs, must prove ruinous at this important juncture. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO COUNT DE ROCHAMBEAU.

HIGHLANDS, STATE OF NEW YORK,
31 July, 1780.

SIR,

Your letter of the 25th Instant reached me yesterday.

Sir Henry Clinton has sailed as mentioned in my last with the principal part of his force to attack you, estimated at about eight thousand men. It cannot be more, nor do I suppose he would hazard the enterprise with a much less number. I am glad the inactivity of the enemy has given you time to prepare; and, relying on your abilities, and the excellence of your troops, I hope you will send them back with disgrace. Had I any prospect of arriving in time I would march to your support; but, as I think there is no probability of this, the only way I can be useful to you is to menace New York, and even to attack it, if the force remaining there does not exceed what I have reason to believe. I am pressing my movements for this purpose, with all the rapidity in our power. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

[1] On the 19th, four British vessels appeared off the harbor of Newport, and the next morning, as soon as the wind would permit, three frigates of the French squadron went in pursuit of them; and two days afterwards nine or ten British vessels of the line came in sight, with five frigates and four small vessels. The three French frigates and a despatch boat were chased into the harbor. The British fleet continued near Block Island. From these movements it was evidently the object of the British commander to blockade the French squadron; and an attack was also feared before preparations could be made to resist it. General Heath immediately ordered Colonel Greene's regiment of Continental troops, and the recruits for that service, to take post at Howland's Ferry, Bristol Ferry, and Butts's Hill. He called on the governor of Rhode Island for fifteen hundred militia, and requested eight hundred more from Bristol County in Massachusetts. He likewise wrote to the Council of Massachusetts, desiring

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HEATH.

DEAR SIR, ROBINSON'S HOUSE, 31 July, 1780.

I arrived here last night, having met your favors of the 25th & 26th at Peramus, where the army then lay.

Immediately upon hearing, that the transports with the troops, which had been some days on board, had sailed Eastward, I put the army in motion again. They will cross the Ferry to-day, and will be joined by the troops from hence. I propose moving as rapidly as possible down towards Kingsbridge, which will either oblige the enemy to abandon their project against Rhode Island, or may afford us an opportunity of striking them to advantage in this quarter, if

that all the militia in the State, who had been detached to serve for three months in the main army, except those in Hampshire and Berkshire counties should be sent immediately to Newport. A like requisition was made on Governor Trumbull for one thousand militia from Connecticut. With these forces, if they could be speedily collected, Count de Rochambeau thought he should be able to withstand an attack.

The Marquis de Lafayette arrived at Newport on the 25th of July, and intelligence had already come from various quarters, that Sir Henry Clinton was preparing to proceed in person from New York, with a large part of his army, to give battle to the French. The most vigorous efforts were made to meet the event. As Lafayette was well acquainted with the environs of Newport, having examined them at the time of General Sullivan's expedition, the French officers arranged with him a plan of defence. Connanicut Island was to be abandoned, and all the force to be concentrated on Rhode Island. The transports were to be secured in the harbor, and the ships to be stationed at anchor from Brenton's Point northward, where they would be protected by batteries. A frigate and a cutter were to be placed in Seaconnet Passage. The army was to remain encamped at its usual station, till the enemy should appear, and then move and attack them wherever they should disembark. If unsuccessful, the troops were to retreat and rally behind the old lines, which had been thrown up by the British, and there maintain a defence. A body of militia was likewise to be posted within those lines.—*MS. Letters of Lafayette and Heath*, July 21st, 26th.—*Sparks.*

Sir Henry Clinton has carried with him the number of men reported (eight thousand), and with less than which I think he would scarcely venture an attempt upon Count Rochambeau, reinforced by the militia. I entirely approve of the measure you have taken for calling in aid, and I have the strongest hopes, that, if Sir Henry should venture upon an attack, he will meet with a reception very different from what he expects. You know the critical situation in which this army will be in a position below, and how much depends upon constant intelligence of the motions of the enemy. I shall direct relays of expresses the whole way between this army and you, to convey intelligence in the most expeditious manner.

The nearest express to you will be upon Tower Hill; and General Greene advises, that you should keep two whale-boots to communicate with him by South Ferry, so long as that passage shall be safe, and, if that should be interrupted, by Bissell's Harbor. I am, &c.[1]

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL FELLOWS, MASSACHUSETTS MILITIA.

HEAD-QUARTERS, PEEKSKILL,
31 July, 1780.

SIR,

By advices just received, I hear that the Enemy have cut off the communication with Fort Schuyler; and, as the place is not well supplied with provision,

[1] "We are thus far [Peekskill], my dear Marquis, on our way to New York. To-morrow the whole army was to have taken up its line of march, and would have moved with all the rapidity in our power to this object, had we not a few hours since received advice from the Sound, dated yesterday, that the fleet of

there is reason to fear the loss of that valuable post, unless it is speedily relieved. You will therefore be pleased instantly upon the receipt hereof to detach five hundred of the militia under your command properly officered, with direction to the officer to march and put himself under the command of Brigadier-General Van Rensselaer of Tryon county. I have written to Colonel Van Schaick at Albany, to supply provisions, wagons, and whatever else may be necessary to expedite the march of the detachment. Governor Clinton has written to the same effect to Colonel Van Schaick, and to General Van Rensselaer. When you consider how very essential the post of Fort Schuyler is to the security of our whole frontier, and that the saving of the harvest of the fine country upon the Mohawk River depends upon the immediate removal of the enemy, I am convinced you will not lose any time in marching off the detachment, that they may form a junction with the militia of the State of New York. Ammunition will be ready at Albany.

I am, &c.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

PEEKSKILL, 3 August, 1780.

I received this day, my dear Marquis, your letter of the 29th of July. The blunders which have been made with respect to arms, ammunition, and cloath-

transports had put back, and were steering westward. Colonel Sheldon, by a letter this instant come to hand, writes me to the same effect. We shall therefore govern our subsequent motions agreeably to our original plan."— *Washington to Lafayette*, 1 August, 1780.

ing, are serious disappointments. I think, however, from a closer inspection of our means, that we shall be able to collect nearly arms enough to put into the hands of our recruits, and powder enough to undertake the enterprise, if in the course of the operation we can depend on the fifty ton expected from France, and can obtain fifty ton more from the fleet.

I would not wish you to press the French General and Admiral to any thing, to which they show a disinclination, especially to withdrawing their troops from Rhode Island before the second division arrives to give them a naval superiority. Should they yield to importunity, and an accident happen either there or here, they would lay the consequences to us. Only inform them what we can do, what we are willing to undertake, and let them intirely consult their own inclination for the rest. Our prospects are not so flattering as to justify our being very pressing to engage them in our views. I shall, however, go on with all our preparations, and hope circumstances will ultimately favor us. If a part of the West India fleet should come this way, it will powerfully contribute to our success.

Should not the second division arrive so as to enable us to commence our operations by the first of September, I shall have no great expectation of effecting the object. When we calculated on having twice the force of the enemy, we included the whole succor expected from France. It will be difficult, if not impracticable, to accomplish this before the second division arrives. The number of men come in

hitherto rather fall short of than exceed our calculation.

Nothing appears to me more evident, than that a communication may be secured with Long Island by land batteries. The narrowness of the Sound, the Islands, the sinuosity and other difficulties of the channel about Hell Gate, show the impracticability of vessels interrupting the communication you may establish there. All the experiments I have seen demonstrate, that shipping cannot be under the fire of land batteries, nor will they venture to try their strength with them except when they are low, or there is a bold shore, and they can annoy them from their tops; neither of which would be the case there.

I wrote to you two days ago by a French gentleman on his way to Rhode Island with despatches from the Minister of France. You will find by that letter, that, on the 31st of July, the enemy's fleet returned towards New York. In all probability our movement this way occasioned them to relinquish their expedition to Rhode Island. To-morrow we recross the River and proceed toward Dobbs's Ferry; our motives for recrossing are to save transportation and forage. Your Light Infantry is formed, about two thousand fine men; but the greater part of them naked. Adieu, my dear Marquis, &c.[1]

[1] By advices, which Sir Henry Clinton had received from the Ministry, he was prepared to expect the French armament; and other intelligence had convinced him, that its destination was probably Rhode Island. This opinion he communicated seasonably to Admiral Arbuthnot, and requested that transports for six thousand men might be kept in readiness to receive troops, in case an enterprise should be deemed expedient as soon as the French should arrive. Al-

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HEATH.

HEAD-QUARTERS, PEEKSKILL,
3 August, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I received yesterday your letter of the 29th ultimo. Before this comes to hand, you will have been informed, that the fleet in the sound, which it is generally believed was designed to proceed to Rhode Island, has returned. We have so many accounts of this, that we have no doubt of it, and are pursuing measures accordingly. With respect to the return of the militia, who were called for under the persuasion that the enemy meant to attack the Count [de Rochambeau], it will rest with him and you to determine the point. But, as it is of consequence, on account of the state of our provisions, that we should not have more of these in the Field, than prudence and necessity may require, and as it is not very probable, that the Enemy will now return upon their steps

though the French fleet entered the harbor of Newport on the 10th of July, the news did not reach New York till the 18th. Sir Henry Clinton determined, nevertheless, to attempt an attack either by land or by a combined operation with the fleet and immediately gave notice of his design to the admiral. He proceeded with his troops to Frog's Neck, but the transports did not arrive till the 27th, when it was too late to hope for success by a *coup de main*. He embarked his troops; but, receiving information that the French had been very active in fortifying themselves at Newport, and that the militia were assembling at that place, he considered it impossible to secure success by land forces alone, and crossed the Sound to Huntington Bay, where the troops were disembarked on the 31st. The approach of Washington to New York also rendered it necessary for him to hasten back. By his first plan he hoped, with the aid of the fleet, to make a rapid descent upon Rhode Island, and return to New York before Washington should be able to move with his army upon that city. His scheme was defeated by the delay in furnishing transports. There was a want of harmony between Admiral Arbuthnot and Sir Henry Clinton, which already began to produce ill effects, and which in the end proved very unfavorable to the public service.—*Sparks.*

and prosecute their supposed original plan, it might be best to permit the militia to go to their homes.[1]

As to your coming on to the army immediately, I shall leave it intirely with yourself to act in the affair as you please. Your command is, and will always be, ready for you. However, if you find your presence where you are necessary, and that it will contribute to the accommodation of our allies, and to the cultivation of harmony, matters about which I am very anxious, it may possibly be more eligible for you to remain longer, as we shall not, probably, have any instant active operations. But, as I have already said, do in the matter as you like, and as circumstances may decide.[2]

[1] The militia had come in with great promptness and alacrity from Rhode Island and Massachusetts. As soon as it was known, that General Clinton had suspended or abandoned his enterprise against Newport, it was agreed between General Heath and Count de Rochambeau, that all the militia should be sent home except three thousand five hundred. Of these, two thousand were stationed between Quaker Hill and the town, and the remainder at Butts's Hill. The militia, that were retained, had been called out to serve for three months.

[2] "As to your wish to join the army, as I have observed before, your aid may be very material to the Count; and, as we have no prospect of immediate active operations, I would rather wish you to remain with him longer. I thought it essential, in the first instance, that there should be an officer of rank sent to him; and a variety of reasons concurred to induce me to believe, that you would answer the important objects I had in view as well, at least, as any I could choose. I have not been disappointed in the least in my expectations; and the Count himself judges your continuing very essential, and expressed himself in the following manner upon the subject several days ago. 'I shall keep with me, if you think proper, General Heath, whose ardor, spirit, and activity are absolutely necessary to me.' For these several considerations, I wish you to reconcile yourself to remaining with him for a while; which will be the more easy, when you consider that you will be fully advertised, whenever we are in a situation to attempt any thing offensive on a great scale, and will have your command.

"On further consideration the Rhode Island militia, or three months' men, will not proceed till further orders, or till the French troops advance."—*Washington to Major-General Heath*, 17 August, 1780.

I find by a letter from His Excellency Governor Greene, of the 24th, that nearly the whole of the State's quota of levies for filling her two Regiments had assembled, and were doing duty under the command of Colonel Greene. It is of consequence that Colonel Greene's Regiment and the levies should join the army, in order to compleat our arrangements, and that they may be disciplined. However, I would not wish them to be ordered on, without your consulting the Count and his approbation of the measure. If they do not march immediately, you will impress Colonel Greene with the necessity there is for his strictest and most constant attention to disciplining them, and for his being ready to proceed the moment he is ordered, or that the Count shall judge his remaining longer unnecessary. You will also direct him to transmit me a return of his Regiment and of the Levies. I am, dear Sir, with great regard, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL ARNOLD.

INSTRUCTIONS.

PEEKSKILL, 3 August, 1780.

You are to proceed to West Point, and take the command of that post and its dependencies, in which are included all from Fishkill to King's Ferry. The corps of infantry and cavalry, advanced towards the Enemy's lines on the East side of the River, will also be under your orders, and will take directions from you; and you will endeavor to obtain every intelligence of the Enemy's motions. The garrison of West Point is to consist of the Militia of New Hampshire and Massachusetts; for which reason, as soon as the number from those States amounts to

twelve hundd. the New York Militia under the command of Colonel Malcom, are to join the Main Army on the West side of the River ; and, when the number from Massachusetts Bay alone shall amount to fifteen hundred, Rank and File, the Militia of New Hampshire will also march to the Main Army. Colonel James Livingston's regiment is, till further orders, to garrison the redoubts at Stony and Verplanck's Points.

Claverac, upon the North River, is appointed for the place of rendezvous of the Militia of New Hampshire and Massachusetts, from whence you will have them brought down as fast as they arrive. A supply of provision will be necessary at that place, which you will order, from time to time, as there may be occasion. You will endeavor to have the Works at West Point carried on as expeditiously as possible by the Garrison, under the direction and Superintendence of the Engineers, the Stores carefully preserved, and the provision safely deposited and often inspected, particularly the salted meat. A certain quantity of provision has been constantly kept in each work, to be ready against a sudden attack. Where there are bomb-proofs, they serve for Magazines ; but in the smaller works, where there are none, you will have places erected sufficiently tight to preserve the provision from damage and pillage.

You will, as soon as possible, obtain and transmit an accurate Return of the Militia, which have come in, and inform me regularly of their increase. Should any Levies from the State of New York, or those to the Eastward of it, intended for the Continental Army, arrive at West Point, you will immediately forward them to the lines to which they respectively belong. The difficulties, we shall certainly experience, on the score of provisions, render the utmost economy highly necessary. You will, therefore, attend frequently to the daily Issues ; and, by comparing them with your Returns, will be able to check any impositions. I am, &c.[1]

[1] Although there had been various intimations to the Commander-in-chief, that Arnold wished the command at West Point, yet he had delayed conferring it, probably because he considered the services of so efficient an officer much more important in the main army. In the arrangement of the army, therefore, published in general orders on the 1st of August, the command of the

TO COUNT DE ROCHAMBEAU.

HEAD-QUARTERS, PEEKSKILL,
5 August, 1780.

SIR,

I was yesterday honored with your letter of the 30th of July.

I applaud all the measures you have taken, which appear to me precisely such as the occasion required; and I am very happy to hear, that the neighboring States manifested so much ardor in doing what their interest, their duty, and their gratitude demanded from them. It is my wish you should detain the levies, as long as you think they can be useful to you.

The Marquis de Lafayette will have informed you, by my desire, that Clinton returned with his fleet the 31st of July. He has since landed his troops on Long Island, and I think will hardly resume the project, which he certainly entertained, of attacking you. In consequence of his return, the army is re-crossing the River and will proceed to Dobbs's Ferry, about ten miles from Kingsbridge, where we intend to establish a communication that will save us a considerable land transportation, in case New York is our eventual object. The reason for preferring the West side of the River to the other, which at first sight will appear most natural, is to meet our supplies of flour, and save the forage on this side; both of which in our circumstances are objects of importance. By the enclosed copy of a letter to the Cheva-

left wing was assigned to Arnold. When it was found, that he was disappointed and dissatisfied, and complained that his wound would not allow him to act in the field, Washington complied with his request to be stationed at West Point.

lier de la Luzerne, you will see the opinion I have ventured to give respecting the second division, concerning which I impatiently wait to secure your sentiments and those of the Chevalier de Ternay, with a plan for a junction of the fleets as suggested in my letter. No other changes have taken place in the situation of the enemy at New York. I am, &c.

P. S. The minister, agreeably to the application to him, has sent out fast sailing Cruisers from all the parts of the coast where it is probable they may fall in with the second division.

TO JOHN PARKE CUSTIS.

PEEKSKILL, 6 August, 1780.

DEAR CUSTIS:

Your letter of the 26th of July came to my hands yesterday, and I thank you for the account given of the scheme. I should have thought the omission unpardonable, as it must, in a manner have set our money afloat again, when every measure which human policy is capable of devising ought to be adopted to give it a fixed and permanent value. I much fear your act for raising three thousand men will rather fall short than exceed that number, because it is our fortune to have such kind of laws (though most Important) badly executed, and such men as are raised dissipated and lost before they join the army. Your scheme for association I must approve; it is certainly high time to retrench in all kinds of extravagance, and to adopt the most eco-

nomical plans, that, by a return to virtue, we may be the better able to support the war and bring it to a happy issue. In consequence of General Clinton's embarking a considerable part of the force at New York, and sailing down the Sound for Rhode Island, I put my troops in motion and crossed at King's ferry, where, assembling my whole force, was determined to make a vigorous effort to possess myself of the city. This brought him back again, and, though I am disappointed by it, has answered the end of relief to the French troops at Rhode Island, which was the object of his destination. I am now, for the sake of shortening our transportation of provisions and forage, recrossing the river, and shall move down towards Dobb's ferry till our reinforcements (not a fourth of which are yet come in) arrive, and the supplies which are to enable us to commence the operations of the campaign. * * *

TO MAJOR-GENERAL ARNOLD.

HEAD-QUARTERS, ORANGETOWN,
11 August, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

* * * * * *

I have recd. intelligence, that the British Troops, which lately returned from the Eastward and debarked upon Long Island, have orders to embark again. I cannot suppose, that they mean again to go towards Rhode Island; neither can I think, that, in the present situation of matters, they can expect any success from an attempt upon West point; but, in order that we may run no risque, I shall write to

Colonel Malcom, directing him to halt in the neighborhood of Haverstraw till further orders. He will from thence be in supporting distance of the posts, should a serious move up the river take place. You will also detain all the militia of Massachusetts and New Hampshire, who may come in, until we receive more certain intelligence of the views and intentions of the Enemy. You will put all your posts upon their guard. They can be affected by nothing but a surprise, while this army is so near them.

We shall have occasion to throw up some small works at Dobbs's Ferry, to secure the intended communication at that place ; and, in order that we may be enabled to finish them in the most expeditious manner, you will be pleased to order sixty of Colonel Baldwin's regimented Artificers to come immediately down here.

Colonel Hay writes, that he shall be able to lay up some stock of hay at Fishkill, provided orders are given, that none shall be issued while Grass or pasture is to be had, except upon such occasions as you, or the Dy. Qr. Master-General at the post, shall think proper. This measure appears necessary ; and you will, therefore, be pleased to give orders to have it carried into execution. A new Qr. Mr.-Genl. (Colonel Pickering) is appointed. Whether he will be supplied with the means of procuring what is necessary in the department, or whether the new system is calculated to produce them, is yet to be known. In the mean time, you can only proceed in working up the materials, which you find upon hand. I am, &c.

TO JOSEPH JONES.

HEAD-QUARTERS, TAPPAN,
13 August, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

The subject of this letter will be confined to a single point. I shall make it as short as possible, and write it with frankness. If any sentiment therefore is delivered, which might be displeasing to you as a member of Congress, ascribe it to the freedom which is taken with you by a friend, who has nothing in view but the public good.

In your letter without date, but which came to hand yesterday, an idea is held up, as if the acceptance of General Greene's resignation of the quartermaster's department was not all that Congress meant to do with him.[1] If by this it is in contemplation to suspend him from his command in the line, of which he made an express reservation at the time of entering

[1] Mr. Jones had written from Congress: "We have been greatly perplexed the last week with General Greene's refusal to act in the office of quartermaster-general, unless the new system was totally repealed, and he was allowed to conduct it under your direction in such a manner as he should think most conducive to the public service. If General Greene thought the new system wanted amendment, and had pointed out the defect, Congress would have considered the matter, and I doubt not would have made the necessary alteration. But the manner of these demands, made in such peremptory terms at the moment of action, when the campaign was opened, the enemy in the field, and our ally waiting for coöperation, has lessened General Greene, not only in the opinion of Congress, but I think of the public; and I question whether it will terminate with the acceptance of his refusal only.

"On Saturday Colonel Pickering was appointed to the office of quartermaster-general, with the rank of Colonel and the pay and rations of a brigadier-general, and to hold his seat at the Board of War without pay or right to act while in the office of quartermaster-general. This gentleman's integrity, ability, and attention to business will, I hope, not only prevent the evils to be apprehended from a change in so important a department at this time, but be able to reform some of the abuses, which have crept into that business."

on the other duty, and it is not already enacted, let me beseech you to consider well what you are about before you resolve. I shall neither condemn nor acquit General Greene's conduct for the act of resignation, because all the antecedent correspondence is necessary to form a right judgment of the matter; and possibly, if the affair is ever brought before the public, you may find him treading on better ground than you seem to imagine; but this by the by. My sole aim at present is to advertise you of what I think would be the consequences of suspending him from his command in the line (a matter distinct from the other) without a proper trial. A procedure of this kind must touch the feelings of every officer. It will show in a conspicuous point of view the uncertain tenure by which they hold their commissions. In a word, it will exhibit such a specimen of power, that I question much if there is an officer in the whole line, that will hold a commission beyond the end of the campaign, if he does till then. Such an act in the most despotic government would be attended at least with loud complaints.

It does not require with you, I am sure, at this time of day, arguments to prove, that there is no set of men in the United States, considered as a body, that have made the same sacrifices of their interest in support of the common cause, as the officers of the American army; that nothing but a love of their country, of honor, and a desire of seeing their labors crowned with success, could possibly induce them to continue one moment in service; that no officer can

live upon his pay; that hundreds, having spent their little all in addition to their scanty public allowance, have resigned, because they could no longer support themselves as officers; that numbers are at this moment rendered unfit for duty for want of clothing, while the rest are wasting their property, and some of them verging fast to the gulf of poverty and distress.

Can it be supposed, that men under these circumstances, who can derive at best, if the contest ends happily, only the advantages which accrue in equal proportion to others, will sit patient under such a precedent? Surely they will not; for the measure, not the man, will be the subject of consideration, and each will ask himself this question: if Congress by its mere fiat, without inquiry and without trial, will suspend an officer to-day, and an officer of such high rank, may it not be my turn to-morrow, and ought I to put it in the power of any man or body of men to sport with my commission and character, and lay me under the necessity of tamely acquiescing, or, by an appeal to the public, exposing matters, which must be injurious to its interests? The suspension of Generals Schuyler and St. Clair, though it was preceded by the loss of Ticonderoga, which contributed not a little for the moment to excite prejudices against them, was by no means viewed with a satisfactory eye by many discerning men, though it was in a manner supported by the public clamor; and the one in contemplation I am almost certain will be generally reprobated by the army.

Suffer not, my friend, if it is within the compass of your abilities to prevent it, so disagreeable an event to take place. I do not mean to justify, to countenance, or excuse, in the most distant degree, any expressions of disrespect, which the gentleman in question, if he has used any, may have offered to Congress; no more than I do any unreasonable matters he may have required respecting the quartermaster-general's department; but, as I have already observed, my letter is to prevent this suspension, because I fear, because I feel, that it must lead to very disagreeable and injurious consequences. General Greene has his numerous friends out of the army as well as in it; and, from his character and consideration in the world, he might not, when he felt himself wounded in so summary a way, withhold himself from a discussion, that could not at best promote the public cause. As a military officer he stands very fair, and very deservedly so, in the opinion of all his acquaintances. These sentiments are the result of my own reflections, and I hasten to inform you of them. I do not know that General Greene has ever heard of the matter, and I hope he never may; nor am I acquainted with the opinion of a single officer in the whole army upon the subject, nor will any tone be given by me. It is my wish to prevent the proceeding; for, sure I am, that it cannot be brought to a happy issue, if it takes place. I am, &c.[1]

[1] "As you are retiring from the office of quartermaster-general, and have requested my sense of your conduct and services while you acted in it, I shall give it to you with the greatest cheerfulness and pleasure. You have conducted the various duties of it with capacity and diligence, entirely to my satisfaction,

TO THE CHEVALIER DE TERNAY.

HEAD-QUARTERS, ORANGETOWN,
16 August, 1780.

SIR,

The reasons, which you assign for preferring the harbor of Boston to that of Delaware for the rendezvous of the second division, are certainly well founded, and I hope, from the steps which have been taken to give it notice of the position of Admiral Arbuthnot's fleet, that the division will reach one or the other of those ports in safety. I immediately communicated to the Board of Admiralty at Philadelphia your opinion of the most advantageous manner of employing the American frigates and sloop Saratoga, until circumstances shall admit of our commencing serious operations against the enemy; and I have advised them, should it not interfere with any arrangements which may have been previously made, to adopt the measures recommended by you. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

and, as far as I have had an opportunity of knowing, with the strictest integrity. When you were prevailed on to undertake the office, in March, 1778, it was in great disorder and confusion, and by extraordinary exertions you so arranged it, as to enable the army to take the field the moment it was necessary, and to move with rapidity after the enemy when they left Philadelphia. From that period to the present time, your exertions have been equally great. They have appeared to me to be the result of a system, and to have been well calculated to promote the interest and honor of your country. In fine, I cannot but add, that the States have had in you, in my opinion, an able, upright, and diligent servant."—*Washington to Major-General Greene*, 15 August, 1780.

[1] M. de Ternay objected to the Delaware as the place for the rendezvous of the second French squadron expected soon to arrive in the American waters, on account of the difficult navigation of that bay for large ships, and the danger of being blockaded there by the British fleet. He considered Boston harbor as more secure, and as affording greater advantages for future operations. The merchant vessels, which were convoyed by the fleet of the second

TO THE COMMITTEE OF CO-OPERATION.

HEADQUARTERS, ORANGE TOWN,
17 August, 1780.

GENTLEMEN,

We are now arrived at the middle of August; if we are able to undertake any thing in this quarter, this campaign our operations must commence in less than a month from this, or it will be absolutely too late. It will then be much later than were to be wished, and with all the exertions that can be made, we shall probably be greatly straitened in time.—

But I think it my duty to inform you, that our prospects of operating diminish in proportion as the effects of our applications to the respective states unfold, and I am sorry to add that we have every reason to apprehend we shall not be in a condition at all to undertake anything decisive. The completion of our Continental battalions to their full establishment of 504 rank and file, has been uniformly and justly held up as the basis of offensive operations. How far we have fallen short of this, the

division, he thought might enter the Delaware. "I write accordingly," said he, "to M. de la Luzerne, that, if the second division should arrive in the Chesapeake Bay, it may be at the option of Count de Rochambeau or General Washington to cause the transport vessels to enter the Delaware, and that afterwards the vessels of war should proceed to Boston."

It was the advice of the French admiral, that the American frigates should cruise on the coast, to intercept British vessels sailing from Charleston to New York. He requested that the sloop Saratoga might be sent to St. Domingo with despatches to Count de Guichen, who was then commanding a French squadron in the West Indies. It was hoped that Guichen would join the French armament in the United States, and thus form a decided superiority to the British naval force, by which a successful combined attack might be made on New York. M. de Ternay had instructions from the King to call on M. de Guichen for a reinforcement.

following state of the levies received and of the present deficiencies will show.

By a return to the 16th instant, we had received from

	Rank & file.
New Hampshire	457.
Massachusetts	2898.
Rhode Island	502.
Connecticut	1356.
New York	283.
New Jersey	165
Pennnsylvania	482.
	6143.

The deficiencies of the battalions, from a return of the 12th, allowing for the levies since arrived to the 16th are of

	Battalions.	Rank & file.
New Hampshire	3	248.
Massachusetts including Jackson's, adopted	16	3514.
Rhode Island	2	198.
Connecticut including Webb's, adopted	9	1866.
New York	5	1234.
New Jersey	3	569.
Pennsylvania	11	2768.
In the whole		10,397

If the amount of these deficiencies and the detached corps necessarily on the frontier and at particular posts be deducted, and a proper allowance made for the ordinary casualties, and for the extra calls upon the army for wagoners, artificers etc., it will be easy to conceive how inadequate our operating force must be to any capital enterprise against the enemy. It is indeed, barely sufficient for defence.

Hitherto all the militia for three months, that have taken the field under my orders have been about, 700 from New Hampshire, 1700 from Massachusetts, 800 from New York, 500 from New Jersey.

A part of the Eastern militia has been detained to assist our allies at Rhode Island, and will shortly march to join the army. But from all the information I have, the number of militia will fall, as far short of the demand as the Continental troops, and from the slow manner in which the latter have for some time past come in, I fear we have had nearly the whole we are to expect.

In the article of provisions, our prospects are equally unfavorable. We are now fed by a precarious supply from day to day. The Commissary, from what has been done in the several States, so far from giving assurances of a continuance of this supply, speaks in the most discouraging terms, as you will perceive by the enclosed copy of a letter of the 15th instant, in which he proposes the sending back the Pennsylvania militia, who were to assemble at Trenton, the 12th, on the principle of a failure of provisions.

As to forage and transportation, our prospects are still worse.—These have lately been principally procured by military impress,—a mode too violent, unequal, oppressive and consequently odious, to the people, to be long practised with success.

In this state of things, Gentlemen, I leave it to your own judgment to determine, how little it will be in my power to answer the public expectation, unless

more competent means can be, and are without delay, put into my hands. From the communications of the General and Admiral of our allies, the second division, without some very unfortunate contrariety, will in all probability arrive before the time mentioned as the ultimate period for commencing our operations. I submit it to you, whether it will not be advisable immediately to lay before the several States a view of our circumstances at the juncture, in consequence of which they may take their measures. I have the honor to be, &c.

N. B. The return of the Rhode Island recruits is of the last of July; more may have since joined.

There is a body of Connecticut State troops and militia employed in preparing fascines, etc., on the Sound.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

ORANGETOWN, 20 August, 1780.

SIR,

I have been duly honored with your Excellency's letters and their enclosures. I have a grateful sense of the confidence of which those acts are expressive, and shall labor to improve it to the utmost extent of the means with which I am entrusted. I sincerely wish our prospects were more favorable than they are.[1]

[1] Hitherto the operations of the Commander-in-chief had been restricted within the limits of the United States. To enable him to act effectually in concert with the French forces, it seemed necessary to remove this restriction, which was done by a resolution of Congress on the 2d of August. In the vote on this question, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New York,

The enclosed copy of a letter to The Honorable the Committee of Coöperation will give Congress an idea of our situation at this time, and how little reason we have to expect we shall be able to prosecute our original intentions in this quarter, even should the event correspond with the expectations of our allies on their part. The same obstacles will oppose in a great degree the operations recommended to the southward; for, from all the accounts we receive from thence, the affairs of the Southern States seem to be so exceedingly disordered, and their resources so much exhausted, that whatever should be undertaken there must chiefly depend on the means carried from hence. If these fail, we shall be condemned to a disgraceful and fatal inactivity. It is impossible to be more impressed with the necessity of the reverse than I am. I think our affairs absolutely require it, and if any efforts of mine can enable us to act with vigor either here or elsewhere, it certainly shall be done. But there is a complication of embarrassments, that menaces us on every side with disappointment.

At this very juncture I am reduced to the painful alternative, either of dismissing a part of the Militia

New Jersey, Delaware, and Virginia, were unanimously in the affirmative; Maryland, North Carolina, and South Carolina were unanimously in the negative; Georgia was divided; Connecticut and Pennsylvania gave one negative vote each, but the majority of the delegates were in the affirmative. It was singular that South Carolina and Georgia should oppose the resolution, as it was mainly intended to enable the Commander-in-chief to operate with more vigor, in concert with the French, and with the Spanish in the West Indies, to drive the enemy from those two States.—See the *Secret Journals of Congress*, vol. i., p. 161.—*Sparks*.

now Assembling (though by the way they were to have rendezvoused the 25th of last month), or let them come forward to starve, which it will be extremely difficult for the Troops already in the field to avoid. If we adopt the first, we shall probably not be able to get them out again in time to be of any service this Campaign, and to let them come on without the means of subsistence would be absurd. Every day's experience proves more and more, that the present mode of obtaining supplies is the most uncertain, expensive, and injurious, that could be devised. It is impossible for us to form any calculations of what we are to expect, and consequently to concert any plans for future execution. No adequate provision for forage having been made, we are now obliged to subsist the Horses of the Army by force, which among other evils often gives rise to civil disputes and prosecutions, as vexatious as they will be burthensome to the public. This is the spirit prevailing among the inhabitants, and its effects cannot be prevented by us, without an open rupture with the Civil Majestrate. Influence and persuasion begin now to be unavailing; we of course have no other remedy.

In our present state of suspense, I would not propose any specific requisitions of the Southern States, other than those already made. They should be urged to exert themselves to comply with these, and in general to do every thing in their power to form as ample Magazines of Bread, forage, and salted meat, as the resources of the Country will afford, at

such deposits as the Commanding officer in that quarter may point out, having regard, as far as circumstances will admit, to transportation by water. Congress, I doubt not, are better acquainted with the abilities of those States than I am, or any person I can consult, and will be better able to direct calculations of what they can furnish. If they think any further specific demands necessary to answer the purpose of forming Magazines, I shall be much obliged to them to take the proper measures, calculating for an army of eight thousand American troops. If possible, this force should be kept up and supplied in any case, while the enemy remain there with their present strength.

If any thing more can be done to stimulate the States this way to a compliance with the requisitions made of them, particularly in the articles of flour and forage, where we seem most defective, it will conduce more than any thing else to enable us to act both here and to the southward; for, as I before observed, it appears to me evident, that the means for a southern operation, as well with respect to supplies as men, must be principally carried from hence.

But while we are meditating offensive operations, which may either not be undertaken at all, or being undertaken may fail, I am persuaded Congress are not inattentive to the present state of the army, and will view in the same light with me the necessity of providing in time against a period—the 1st of January—when one half of our present force will dissolve.

The shadow of an army, that will remain, will have every motive, except mere patriotism, to abandon the service, without the hope, which has hitherto supported them, of a change for the better. This is almost extinguished now, and certainly will not outlive the campaign, unless it finds something more substantial to rest upon. This is a truth, of which every spectator of the distresses of the army cannot help being convinced; those at a distance may speculate differently, but on the spot an opinion to the contrary, judging human nature on the usual scale, would be chimerical. The honorable the Committee, who have seen and heard for themselves, will add their testimony to mine, and the wisdom and justice of Congress cannot fail to give it the most serious attention. To me it will appear miraculous, if our affairs can maintain themselves much longer in their present train. If either the temper or the resources of the country will not admit of an alteration, we may expect soon to be reduced to the humiliating condition of seeing the cause of America, in America, upheld by foreign arms. The generosity of our allies has a claim to all our confidence and all our gratitude, but it is neither for the honor of America, nor for the interest of the common cause, to leave the work entirely to them.

It is true our Enemies as well as ourselves are struggling with embarrassments of a singular and complicated nature, from which we may hope a great deal. But they have already more than once disappointed the general expectations, and displayed re-

sources as extraordinary as unexpected. There is no good reason to suppose those resources yet exhausted. Hitherto they have carried on the war with pretty equal success, and the comparative forces of this campaign are, I believe, less advantageous to them than they were the last. At present, indeed, their affairs wear a critical aspect, but there are chances in their favor; and, if they escape, their situation will be likely to take a more prosperous turn, and they may continue to prosecute the war with vigor. Their finances are distressed, they have a heavy debt, and are obliged to borrow money at an excessive interest; but they have great individual wealth, and while they can pay the interest of what they borrow, they will not want credit, nor will they fear to stretch it. A bankruptcy, which may be the result, will perhaps be less terrible to the King and his Ministers than giving up the contest. If the measures leading to it enable them to succeed, it will add so much to the influence and power of the crown, as to make that event a ladder to absolute authority, supposed by many to be the object of the present Reign. Nor are there wanting enlightened Politicians, who maintain that a national bankruptcy is not only a necessary consequence, but would be a national benefit. When we consider the genius of the present reign, and the violent counsels by which it has been governed, a system of this kind will be judged less improbable.

As to the domestic dissensions of the enemy in Ireland, we see they have hitherto not only diverted,

but in some measure appeased them; and by pursuing their plan of taking off the leaders, and making plausible concessions to the People, we ought not to be surprised, if they keep matters in that Country from going to extremity. In England it is much to be feared, the overbearing influence of the Crown will triumph over the opposition to it, and that the next Parliament will be nearly as obsequious as the last. A change of some of the ministry, to make way for a few of the principal heads of opposition, would perhaps allay the ferment. But even without this, considering the complexion of the British nation for some time past, it is more probable these appearances will terminate in a partial reform, than in any revolution favorable to the interests of America. The ministry may be perplexed for a time, and may be obliged to make a few sacrifices in favor of public economy, which may finally promote their views by leaving more money in the treasury to be applied to the purposes of the war.

The general disposition of Europe is such as we could wish; but we have no security that it will remain so. The politics of Princes are fluctuating, more guided often, by a particular prejudice, whim, or interest, than by extensive views of policy. The change or caprice of a single minister is capable of altering the whole system of Europe. But, admitting the different courts at this time ever so well fixed in their principles, the death of one of the sovereigns may happen, and the whole face of things be reversed. This ought to be the more attended to, as

three of the principal Potentates are at so advanced an age, that it is perhaps more probable one of them should die in the course of a year, than that all three should survive it.

The inference from these reflections is, that we cannot count upon a speedy end to the war, and that it is the true policy of America not to content herself with temporary expedients, but to endeavor, if possible, to give consistency and solidity to her measures. An essential step to this will be immediately to devise a plan, and put it in execution, for providing men in time to replace those who will leave us at the end of the year, for subsisting and making a reasonable allowance to the officers and soldiers. The plan for this purpose ought to be of general operation, and such as will execute itself. Experience has shown, that a peremptory draft will be the only effectual one. If a draft for the war or three years can be effected, it ought to be made on every account. A shorter period than a year is inadmissible. To one, who has been witness to the evils brought upon us by short enlistments, the system appears to have been pernicious beyond description, and a crowd of motives present themselves to dictate a change. It may easily be shown, that all the misfortunes we have met with in the military line are to be attributed to this cause.

Had we formed a permanent army in the beginning, which, by the continuance of the same men in service, had been capable of discipline, we never should have had to retreat with a handful of men

across the Delaware in '76, trembling for the fate of America, which nothing but the infatuation of the enemy could have saved; we should not have remained all the succeeding winter at their mercy, with sometimes scarcely a sufficient body of men to mount the ordinary guards, liable at every moment to be dissipated, if they had only thought proper to march against us: we should not have been under the necessity of fighting at Brandywine, with an unequal number of raw troops, and afterwards of seeing Philadelphia fall a prey to a victorious army; we should not have been at Valley Forge with less than half the force of the enemy, destitute of every thing, in a situation neither to resist nor to retire; we should not have seen New York left with a handful of men, yet an overmatch for the main army of these States, while the principal part of their force was detached for the reduction of two of them; we should not have found ourselves this spring so weak, as to be insulted by five thousand men, unable to protect our baggage and Magazines, their security depending on a good countenance, and a want of enterprise in the enemy; we should not have been the greatest part of the war inferior to the enemy, indebted for our safety to their inactivity, enduring frequently the mortification of seeing inviting opportunities to ruin them pass unimproved for want of a force, which the country was completely able to afford; to see the Country ravaged, our towns burnt, the inhabitants plundered, abused, murdered with impunity from the same cause.

Nor have the ill effects been confined to the military line. A great part of the embarrassments in the civil departments flow from the same source. The derangement of our finances is essentially to be ascribed to it. The expenses of the war, and the Paper emissions, have been greatly multiplied by it. We have had, a great part of the time, two sets of men to feed and pay, the discharged men going home and the Levies coming in. This was more remarkable in '75 and '76. The difficulty and cost of engaging men have increased at every successive attempt, till among the present levies we find there are some, who have received a hundred and fifty dollars in specie for five months' service, while our officers are reduced to the disagreeable necessity of performing the duties of drill sergeants to them, and with this mortifying reflection annexed to the business, that, by the time they have taught those men the rudiments of a soldier's duty, their term of service will have expired, and the work is to recommence with an entire new set. The consumption of Provision, arms, accoutrements, stores of every kind, has been doubled in spite of every precaution I could use, not only from the cause just mentioned, but from the carelessness and licentiousness incident to militia and irregular Troops. Our discipline also has been much injured, if not ruined, by such frequent changes. The frequent calls upon the militia have interrupted the cultivation of the Land, and of course have lessened the quantity of its produce, occasioned a scarcity, and enhanced the prices. In an army so

unstable as ours, order and economy have been impracticable. No person, who has been a close observer of the progress of our affairs, can doubt that our currency has depreciated without comparison more rapidly from the system of short enlistments, than it would have done otherwise.

There is every reason to believe, the War has been protracted on this account. Our opposition being less, made the successes of the enemy greater. The fluctuation of the army kept alive their hopes, and at every period of the dissolution of a considerable part of it, they have flattered themselves with some decisive advantages. Had we kept a permanent army on foot, the enemy could have had nothing to hope for, and would in all probability have listened to terms long since.

If the army is left in its present situation, it must continue an encouragement to the efforts of the enemy; if it is put upon a respectable one, it must have a contrary effect, and nothing, I believe, will tend more to give us peace the ensuing winter. It will be an interesting winter. Many circumstances will contribute to a negotiation. An army on foot not only for another campaign, but for several campaigns, would determine the enemy to pacific measures, and enable us to insist upon favorable terms in forcible language; an army insignificant in numbers, dissatisfied, crumbling into pieces, would be the strongest temptation they could have to try the experiment a little longer. It is an old maxim, that the surest way to make a good peace is to be well prepared for war.

I am inclined to hope a draft for the war, or for three years, would succeed. Many incentives of immediate interest may be held up to the people to induce them to submit to it. They must begin to consider the repeated bounties they are obliged to pay as a burthen, and be willing to get rid of it by sacrificing a little more once for all. Indeed it is probable, the bounties may not be much greater in that case than they have been. The people of the States near the Seat of War ought to enter into such a plan with alacrity, as it would ease them in a variety of respects; among others, by obviating the frequent calls upon the Militia.

I cannot forbear returning in this place to the necessity of a more ample and equal provision for the army. The discontents on this head have been gradually matured to a dangerous extremety. There are many symptoms that alarm and distress me. Endeavors are using to unite both officers and men in a general refusal of the money, and some Corps now actually decline receiving it. Every method has been taken to counteract it, because such a combination in the army would be a severe blow to our declining currency. The most moderate insist, that the accounts of depreciation ought to be liquidated at stated periods, and certificates given by Government for the sums due. They will not be satisfied with a general declaration that it shall be made good.

This is one instance of complaint. There are others equally serious. Among the most serious

is the inequality of the provision made by the several States. Pennsylvania maintains her officers in a decent manner; she has given them half-pay for life. What a wide difference between their situation and that of the officers of every other line in this army, some of whom are actually so destitute of Cloathing as to be unfit for duty, and obliged for that cause *only* to confine themselves to Quarters. I have often said, and beg leave to repeat it, the half-pay provision is in my opinion the most politic and effectual that can be adopted. On the whole, if something satisfactory be not done, the army (already so much reduced in officers by daily resignations, as not to have a sufficiency to do the common duties of it,) must either cease to exist at the end of the Campaign, or it will exhibit an example of more virtue, fortitude, self-denial, and perseverance, than has perhaps ever yet been paralleled in the history of human enthusiasm.

The dissolution of the army is an event, that cannot be regarded with indifference. It would bring accumulated distresses upon us; it wd. throw the people of America into a general consternation; it would discredit our cause throughout the world; it would shock our allies. To think of replacing the officers with others is visionary; the loss of the veteran soldiers could not be repaired; to attempt to carry on the war with militia against disciplined troops would be to attempt what the common sense and common experience of mankind will pronounce to be impracticable. But I should fail in respect

to Congress, to dwell on observations of this kind in a letter to them. But having gone into a detail of our situation, I shall beg leave to make one observation more.

It is a thing, that has been all along ardently desired by the army, that every matter which relates to it should be under the immediate direction and providence of Congress. The contrary has been productive of innumerable inconveniences. Besides the inequality of provision already mentioned, all the confusion we have experienced by irregular appointments and promotions has chiefly originated here; and we are again relapsing into the same Chaos. I have daily complaints of palpable mistakes and deviations from those rules on which the tranquillity of the service depends, of which I might cite recent instances if it were necessary to trouble Congress with such a detail. I shall however mention one in the Jersey line, by way of example. A vacancy happened July, 1779, by Lieutenant-Colonel Brearly's being appointed chief justice of the State. This was not filled till March following, by which the officer entitled to succeed has lost several months' rank in the line of the army. The vacancies, his promotion made, still continue open to the prejudice of those next in order; and yet, (as I have been informed,) new appointments have been made by the State on the principle of those vacancies. As this is a fruitful source of discontent, it is naturally in my provence to point it out; but, if I were to permit myself to touch upon the political consequences, I might easily

show, that it has a direct tendency to enfeeble our civil union by making us thirteen armies instead of one, and by attaching the troops of each State to that State, rather than to the United States. The effects of this spirit begin to be visible. But this is a topic on which I may not be permitted to enlarge.

In this delicate and perplexing conjuncture, which I cannot but contemplate with extreme inquietude, I have thought it my duty to lay my sentiments with freedom, and I hope I have done it with all possible deference, before Congress, and to give them the fullest and truest information in my power. I trust they will receive what I have said with all the indulgence, which must flow from a conviction, that it is dictated by a sincere attachment to their honor, and by an anxious concern for the welfare of my country. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO COUNT DE ROCHAMBEAU.

ORANGETOWN, 21 August, 1780.

SIR,

In the letter which I did myself the honor of writing to you the 16th, I had only time to acknowledge the receipt of yours of the 10th, since which I have had the pleasure of successively receiving the two others of the 14th and 17th.

In the idea of an operation against New York, it has always been a fundamental principle with me, that there ought to be a naval superiority to give

[1] Read in Congress August 28th. Referred to Adams, J. Jones, McKean, Scott, and Cornell.

such a prospect of success as would justify the undertaking. Relying, however, upon a moral certainty of this event shortly happening, if you had found yourself in a condition to desire a commencement of operations, previous to the arrival of the second division, I should have concurred in it. The reflections you make on the difficulty of effecting a debarkation on Long Island, without a naval superiority, are natural and judicious, from the view you must have of it; but, from a knowledge in part of the local situation, and from particular inquiries of others, I think the debarkation would be practicable. From the shape of the ground on both sides, and the narrowness of the Sound in several parts, there are different points of debarkation; and the enemy could not with propriety uncover New York so much (especially if we had once thrown ourselves upon that Island) as to have a sufficient force on Long Island to give effectual opposition at each point. The attempt in question supposes a number of boats collected to throw over at once a force superior to the part of the enemy's force opposed to you, which might I believe have been done. Their vessels might have been compelled to keep stations too remote to interrupt your descent, by land batteries erected at different places on the main, and on the intermediate Islands.

But notwithstanding the practicability of such an operation, I intirely agree in opinion with you, for several reasons, that it will be best to defer the commencement of the enterprise till we get a superiority

at sea. One of the most powerful is, that you could not leave the fleet in security without a considerable part of the land force to coöperate with it, and in this case our collective force would be smaller than would be requisite to act with vigor and confidence.

As to the particular mode of operating against New York, we may at this time combine different possibilities; but we cannot fix a definitive plan. There are three ways in which we may accomplish our purpose; by acting in the first instance with our whole force on York Island; by beginning our operations against Brooklyn with the principal part of our force, leaving a corps of observation for the security of our communication well intrenched on York Island or on the main; by dividing our force into two parts to act against the works on both Islands at once. Which of these plans will be preferable must depend on the time we begin to act, and the force we have to act with. If these circumstances correspond with our wishes, I should prefer the last of the three plans. In this case, we ought, if possible, as a preliminary, to establish ourselves on the Island of New York, and then detach to Long Island a force equal to the whole, which the enemy may be able to bring to act there.

In taking post on Long Island, a force equal to the whole of the enemy may be prudent to guard against possibilities; but, after we have taken post and the usual precautions, two thirds of their whole force will in my opinion be sufficient both for security and for the reduction of the works there. Notwithstanding

the facility with which the enemy can pass from one island to the other, they will never hazard to withdraw more than two thirds of their force from York Island to attack the corps on Long Island, while there was an army of more than their whole force in front ready to fall upon the remainder. This would be to expose their essential point, where all their magazines are, to too imminent hazard. Nor even with their whole force would they have great hopes of success against two thirds of the number in intrenchments.[1]

[1] After the Marquis de Lafayette returned from Newport, he wrote a very long letter to Count de Rochambeau, containing a plan for an attack upon New York, and recommending it to the adoption of the French general and admiral. This letter was written with the approbation of General Washington, but it did not accord with the views of the French commanders, who believed that one of the three following conditions ought to be verified, before it would be advisable to act on the offensive. First, the arrival of the second division of French troops, with a maritime force sufficient to give a superiority to the French fleet. Secondly, succors from Count de Guichen, after his enterprise in the West Indies. Thirdly, a decrease of the enemy's force at New York, by a detachment to the West Indies or the southern States. Unless one of these cases should occur, Count de Rochambeau had laid it down as an axiom, that he was to remain on the defensive. He was not well pleased, therefore, with Lafayette's letter, and he presented his objections to the plan of an attack, which it contained. The above explanation was in reply to the letter, in which those objections were stated.

Count de Rochambeau touches upon the matter in his *Mémoires*. He gives an account of the particulars, and adds: "I ought to say, nevertheless, in justification of Lafayette, that he expressed substantially the sentiments of General Washington. That commander feared, and not without foundation, considering the absolute discredit of the finances of Congress, that the struggles of this campaign would be the last efforts of expiring patriotism. He wished, at any hazard, to risk an attack upon the enemy in their strong-hold, while he had the French troops at his disposal. But he perceived the consequences, and adopted the principles of my letter; and, during a long correspondence between us, I could never too highly praise the solidity of his judgment and the amenity of his style."—*Mémoires Militaires, Historiques et Politiques de Rochambeau*, Tom. i., p. 248.—*Sparks*.

These, Sir, are my sentiments, which I am happy to find in the main correspond with yours. A naval superiority we both consider as the basis of offensive operations. We both propose the same distribution of force, if circumstances will permit ; with only this difference, that I think a small number will suffice for Long Island. I ardently desire, that the interview you mention could take place. I am sensible it would infinitely facilitate our arrangements, and it would gratify the extreme desire I feel of assuring you and the admiral personally of my esteem. But, to my great mortification and regret, there are difficulties in the way not easily surmounted. We are about ten miles from the enemy. Our popular government imposes a necessity of great circumspection. If any misfortune should happen in my absence, it would be attended with every inconvenience. I will however endeavor, if possible and as soon as possible, to meet you at some convenient rendezvous. I entreat you to inform me in your next to what distance the admiral and yourself would think it prudent to absent yourselves from the fleet and army.[1]

In one of my last I informed you, that Sir Henry was preparing an embarkation, of which it appears you had also received advice. I have received several pieces of similar intelligence, and there has been lately a very hot press for seamen. I cannot, however, suppose he has resumed his intention to attack you,

[1] Count de Rochambeau replied, that he and the admiral could go as far as Hartford to a rendezvous, and if necessary even to Danbury. He requested General Washington to decide upon the time and place, and desired that the meeting might be held without delay.

as it would imply too much inconsistency. It is suspected by some, that he is making a detachment to the West Indies. If he means any thing serious, this seems to me as probable as any other supposition. But I doubt his having any thing serious in view. I am much obliged to you for the frankness with which you have given me your opinions, and for the favorable sentiments you entertain of me. Your conduct since your arrival has confirmed the prepossession, your reputation had given me of your abilities ; and I promise myself from them, from your counsel, and from your exertions, the most important advantages to the common cause. Let me entreat, you will oblige me with the former upon all occasions, and be assured of the perfect esteem and attachment, with which I have the honor to be, &c.

TO GOVERNOR TRUMBULL.

HEADQUARTERS, ORANGE TOWN,
22 August, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I am again reduced to the painful necessity of informing your Excellency of the situation in which we are, with respect to provision of the meat kind and of earnestly entreating every assistance in your power to give, for our relief.

The whole army, has been already without meat one day, and a great part of it, two. We have none now in camp, and no good prospect that I can find of receiving any within a reasonable time. The most we can hope for, from any resources within our own

command, are Sixty Barrels of salt meat, on the way from West point, which post is now almost entirely degarnished, and cannot have by the last return more than a hundred and twenty barrels, at most, in store. Your Excellency from the state of matters will but too sensibly feel for our alarming situation, and the more so when you reflect we are in a country that did not afford much meat at any time, and that it has been exhausted by the armies on both sides, to the extreme distress of its inhabitants. Our condition at any period would be painful and highly injurious to the public service; but to be in a starving situation at the commencement of the campaign before our operations have even begun, is peculiarly so; must be discouraging in the extreme to our new levies, who now compose half of our force; and must blast and put an end to all our prospects, if we are not relieved from it tho' in every other respect events should arise bidding fair for success. I will not attempt to detail the consequencies to which this would lead, nor the ideas and apprehensions it would excite in our allies and friends abroad, nor the confidence the Enemy would derive from it. These will but too readily occur to your Excellency, and I am sure you will believe with me that our friends would be greatly alarmed and embarrassed at least, at the circumstance. While the cry of the enemy would be,—We will persevere in the war! America cannot maintain even a small army, for our present one cannot be ranked under any other appellation; or what will be equally encouraging to them, but more disgraceful to us, they

will say—Their boasted patriotism is gone, or their wisdom and energy, for though their resources for war still remain, they will not bring them into action!

I am now arranging matters to make a forage on this impoverished people having no other alternative left me, from which I could draw the least possible relief; and even from this, though it will ruin them, I expect to derive the most trifling succor. I rely on that goodness and promptitude I have ever found in your Excellency to promote the public service and am persuaded you will exert all your influence to give us relief, on the present important and alarming occasion.[1]

TO COUNT DE ROCHAMBEAU.

HEAD QUARTERS IN THE VICINITY OF FORT LEE,
26 August, 1780.

SIR,

I have received the honor of Your Excellency's Letters of the 20 & 21 Inst; the last of which came to hand yesterday evening, and am much obliged for

[1] "You are appointed to the command of the Light Infantry, and four brigades from your own wing, to be employed upon a forage down to Bergen, and from thence up to the English neighborhood. You will make the necessary disposition for your own security and the wagons employed on the occasion. Such are the necessities of the army, and such the situation of the Inhabitants, being all within the power of the Enemy, that you will make the forage as extensive as possible in the articles of hay and grain, as well as in cattle, hogs, and sheep, fit for slaughter; and horses fit for the use of the army. All the articles taken are to be receipted for by the respective departments to which they belong; and the whole sent up to the army, and delivered over to the Officers in the several departments to be appointed to receive and receipt for the same, except such articles of provisions and forage, as may be necessary for the subsistence of the Party under your command.

"As soon as you have completed the forage, you will draw off the Troops and

the matters of intelligence they contain, although some of them do not entirely correspond with our wishes.

I am concerned for the situation of Capn. Landais, as he has been esteemed an officer of merit, and as his indisposition has deprived us of recent and more than probable important advices. His not bringing more arms &c is rather unlucky, but their coming in the Ariel, should she arrive safe, which I flatter myself will be the case, will prevent any material inconvenience from the omission.

The British fleet, I should hope, would not be able to keep the second division blocked up after the arrival of the combined one, which had sailed from Cadiz, and if the Enemy have not avoided an engagement which I think is rather to be suspected, I hope our next advices will announce, that they have been most soundly beaten in a general combat.

The intelligence respecting the Irish Militia's driving the English out of the Forts is pleasing and interesting and must be embarrassing to the British

join the army. Should the Enemy attempt to interrupt you in the business, you must govern yourself according to circumstances, leaving you at liberty either to attack or retire, as you may think prudent, from the force they appear in. Particular care is to be taken, that the men don't straggle, and that no unnecessary distress or opposition is brought upon the Inhabitants."—*Washington to Major-General Greene*, 24 August, 1780.

"I am this moment favored with your Letter of this day. I need scarcely inform you of the extreme pain and anxiety, which the licentiousness of some of the soldiery has given me. Something must and shall be done, if possible, to put an effectual check to it. I entirely approve of the prompt Punishment, which you propose to have inflicted on the culprits in question. You will, therefore, be pleased to order one of the soldiers detected in Plundering, and also the Deserters you mention, to be immediately executed."—*Washington to Major-General Greene*, 26 August, 1780.

Ministry. It must be the more so from the internal ferments and insurrections which have taken place within England and which are confirmed thro a variety of Channels. But I am afraid those tumults will not do more than embarrass and will not result in any thing decisively favorable to the common cause. It appears the Ministry were about taking vigorous measures to punish us.

From the information brought by the Vessel arrived at Boston from St. Domingo, it appears that the Count de Guichen was on the point of sailing from thence on the 2d Inst—and would in a few days complete all his arrangements and proceed to Jamaica. I hope these will all have been finished—and that we shall soon have the pleasure to hear of the entire reduction of this very important Island.

Your conjectures about an expedition to Martha's Vinyard &c. are by no means improbable,—as the Enemy have been there before, and collected large supplies of fresh provision. I fear even if the Inhabitants are apprized of it, that it will not prevent them from effecting their purposes.

I am much obliged by the honor you did me in announcing your intention to celebrate the anniversary of St. Louis; and I am persuaded the neighboring States will be sensible of your politeness in the precaution you took to prevent any alarm, as well as feel a lively participation in a compliment paid to a prince towards whom they have so many motives of gratitude and veneration.

The enemy will probably not admire the spectacle,

as I dare say they will have no reason to felicitate themselves on the state of your batteries—

I have been much concerned on account of the Report which has just reached me, tho' not officially, that an Express has been intercepted on the other side of the North River and carried into New York, who had come from thence, lest it should have been the One charged with a Letter I had the honor of writing You on the 21st of this month.—I hope it has not been the case, but from the apprehension I am under on the occasion I have thought it proper to inclose You a Copy. The place where the Express is said to have been intercepted is a considerable distance from the Enemy's Outpost at Kingsbridge, but in future a still more inland route will be used.

I have, &c.

P. S. I have just heard from New York that several Transports, which have been wooding and watering are returning to England. It is added that they carry some Invalids. Possibly this may serve as a solution of the Reports we have had about an embarkation.

CIRCULAR LETTER TO THE STATES NORTH OF VIRGINIA.

HEAD QUARTERS NEAR THE LIBERTY POLE,
BERGEN COUNTY, 27 August, 1780.

SIR,

The Honble the Committee of Cooperation having returned to Congress, I am under the disagreeable necessity of informing your Excellency, that the Army is again reduced to an extremity of distress, for want of provisions. The greater part of it has been without meat from the 21st to the 26th. To endeavor to

obtain some relief, I moved down to this place, with a view of stripping the lower parts of the Country of the remainder of its Cattle, which after a most rigorous exaction is found to afford between two and three days, supply only, and those consisting of Milch Cows and Calves [of one or two] years old: when this scanty pittance is consumed, I know not what will be our next resource, as the Commissary can give me no certain information of more than 120 head of Cattle expected from Pennsylvania and about 150 from Massachusetts. I mean in time to supply our immediate wants.

Military coercion is no longer of any avail, as nothing further can possibly be collected from the Country in which we are obliged to take a position without depriving the inhabitants of the last morsel. This mode of subsisting, supposing the desired end will be answered by it, besides being in the highest degree distressing to individuals, is attended with ruin to the Morals and Discipline of the Army—During the few days which we have been obliged to send out small parties to procure provision for themselves, the most enormous excesses have been committed. It has been no inconsiderable support of our cause, to have had it in our power to contrast the conduct of our Army, with that of the Enemy, and to convince the inhabitants, that while their rights were wantonly violated by the British Troops, by ours they were respected—— This distinction must unhappily now cease, and we must assume the odious character of the Plunderers, instead of the Protectors of the people, the direct consequence of which must be, to alienate their minds from the Army, and insensibly from the cause.

We have not yet been absolutely without Flour but we have thus far but one day's supply in Camp, and I am not certain that there is a single Barrel between this place and Trenton. I shall be obliged therefore to draw down, one or two hundred Barrels, from a small Magazine, which I had endeavored to establish at West Point, for the security of the Garrison in case of sudden investiture.

From the above state of facts, it may be foreseen that this Army cannot possibly remain much longer together unless very vigorous and immediate measures are taken by the States to

comply with the requisitions made upon them. The Commissary General has neither the means nor the power of procuring supplies—he is only to receive them from the several Agents. Without a speedy change of circumstances, this dilemma will be involved: either the Army must disband,—or what is if possible worse, subsist upon the plunder of the People. I would fain flatter myself, that a knowledge of our situation will produce the desired relief—not a relief of a few days as has generally heretofore been the case, but a supply equal to the establishment of Magazines for the Winter.—If these are not formed before the roads are broken up by the weather, we shall certainly experience the same difficulties and distresses the ensuing winter which we did the last. Altho' the Troops have upon every occasion hitherto borne their wants with unparralled patience, it will be dangerous to trust too often to a repetition of the causes of discontent.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HEATH.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 28 August, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I have received your letter of the 22d.

The late European intelligence has so altered the immediate prospects of the campaign, that I think it advisable to dismiss the militia now in service, and prevent any other coming out for the present. You will, therefore, let those now with you return home, as soon as their services are no longer thought necessary by Count de Rochambeau; for, as the probability of operating in this quarter is greatly diminished, and that of an operation elsewhere remote, it becomes our duty to reduce our expenses and economize our supplies as much as possible.

With respect to what you mention concerning the works erecting on Butts's hill, if our allies expect we

are to contribute to the expense of it, we shall be obliged in delicacy to do it; but, if it could have been avoided, it would have better suited the present state of our affairs. I do not consider the works raising on the Island as of any great utility to us, farther than as they contribute to the safety of our allies; and the expense, which may be incurred, will, in my opinion, have little other equivalent than this. You will therefore easily conceive, that I should be glad that every thing of this kind might be avoided, so far as it can be done without impeaching the generosity of the States; for, while our allies are sending fleets and armies to our assistance, and maintaining them at their own expense in our country, it might not be decent to refuse bearing such little expenses as they seem to expect us to bear. But we ought not to volunteer any thing of this kind, and I am persuaded you will not. You will act agreeable to these ideas.[1] With respect to the culprits you mention, you have my consent to pardon such of them as you think proper. I omitted acknowledging your two favors of the 19th. You will accept D. Cook's resignation in the usual forms. I am, with great regard, &c.

[1] An opinion prevailed with some persons, that the French Government did not contribute so largely to the aid of the United States, as the conditions of the alliance and the importance of the common cause required. Among these was Mr. Izard, who had recently returned from France, and who complained that Dr. Franklin neglected to make proper representations to the French Ministry. These things came to the ears of M. de la Luzerne, who said, in reporting them to Count de Vergennes, that, according to the views of Mr. Izard and others of his way of thinking, the American Minister ought instantly to alarm the French court with vivid pictures of the critical situation of the

TO JAMES BOWDOIN, PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL OF MASSACHUSETTS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 28 August, 1780.

I am much obliged to you, my dear Sir, for your letter of the 17th and for the interesting intelligence you do me the favor to communicate. The blockade of the port of Brest, by delaying the sailing of the Second division, makes a material change in our prospects.[1] I fear it will put it out of our power to operate against New York; but, if we are not unfortunate in Europe, and if vigorous measures are taken to give us magazines, we may still hope for some important operation, but it will probably be in a different quarter. I think, however, as I have men-

United States, and redouble his applications and requisitions; that France should be informed, that, without a subsidy of twenty millions of livres annually, and the aid of twenty vessels of war, the United States would be in danger of falling into the hands of England; and even if these should not all be obtained, it was necessary to make France fear, that the people of America, discouraged with the burdens and length of the war, would finally be driven to make a separate arrangement with England.

To this statement Count de Vergennes replied, that nothing could be more pernicious than an attempt to alarm the French Ministry by false and exaggerated accounts; that, as they were well acquainted with the state of affairs, this proceeding would destroy confidence in any future representations, and put the reports of the American Minister in contradiction with those of M. de la Luzerne, who was on the spot; that it would excite suspicions and distrust, instead of the frankness and good faith which had hitherto prevailed; and that it would be returning deception and imposture for the generous conduct and benefits of the King, the only ally of the United States in their greatest distress.—*MS. Letter from Count de Vergennes to M. de la Luzerne*, August 18th.

[1] The frigate Alliance arrived in Boston from L'Orient, on the 16th of August, and brought the intelligence, that the French squadron and troops, which were to constitute the second division of Count de Rochambeau's army, were blockaded in the harbor of Brest by an English fleet of thirty-two sail. The Alliance had on board two thousand stands of arms, several cannon, and a quantity of powder for the United States.

tioned in my official letter to you, that we ought not to discontinue raising men for the Continental battalions, as there is a possibility that we may still operate here, from the movement of the Cadiz fleet, or by a reinforcement from the Islands; or, if an operation here should not be practicable, the increasing of our force will enable us the better to detach to the southward.

I should be happy to comply with the wishes of the Council respecting the arms; but our present deficiencies, and the casualties that dayly arise, will make us stand in need of all that have arrived in the Alliance. We expect a further supply shortly, and the State may depend, that as soon as possible its loan shall be replaced. I entreat your influence to have all the arms, powder, cannon, and cloathing ready made, forwarded without delay to Springfield; for the officers in the service of the Continent have not the necessary means of transportation.

I am informed of a set of resolutions lately entered into by a convention of delegates from the four Eastern States, which, if rightly represented to me, and carried into execution, will be the most likely means that could be adopted to rescue our affairs from the complicated and dreadful embarrassments under which they labor, and will do infinite honor to those with whom they originate. I sincerely wish they may meet with no opposition or delay in their progress. Our situation is truly delicate, and demands all our wisdom, all our virtue, all our energy. Great Britain no doubt encounters many serious perplexities and

dangers, but there will be no miracle in her surmounting them. In Europe, by the last advices, there was a critical moment where the chances were too equally balanced. On this continent the affairs of the enemy are rather too prosperous ; in the West Indies at this season, the elements may fight against our allies, but here is our best hope. As to domestic dissensions, though they will no doubt embarrass, I confess I have no great confidence in them. We have every motive to be in earnest, and to exert ourselves to the utmost to take care of ourselves. With the utmost esteem, I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 28 August, 1780.

SIR,

The day before yesterday we compleated the Forage of which I had the honor to advise Congress the 24th instant, the product of which has been, as was apprehended, very inconsiderable. The Army is now reassembled at this place and will remain here a day or two to consume the forage remaining in the neighborhood, after which we shall probably return to our former position.

The intelligence brought by the Alliance, of the second Division being blocked up in Brest by thirty-two British Ships of the line, has made a material change in the prospects of the Campaign. This, and the extreme distress of our Magazines, have determined me to dismiss all the Militia in service, except such part, as was wanted for immediate purposes.

The probability of our being able to act in this quarter is become too precarious and remote to justify our keeping a large body of Militia in the field, as it would be attended with much expense and additional consumption of provision and Stores, neither of which are we in any condition to afford. This would have been the less eligible, as in all probability the periods for which they were called out would have expired before they could be made use of, if at all. Indeed, I have little hope of any thing decisive in this quarter this campaign. The enclosed Copy of a circular letter to the States respectively will inform Congress of the extremity of our present necessities, and the shocking consequences that are resulting from them.[1]

The army being in motion at the time Mr. Mathews left Head-Quarters, in order to return to Philadelphia, I could not then do myself the honor to

[1] "It is impossible for any person at a distance to have an idea of my embarrassments, or to conceive how any army can be kept together under such circumstances as ours is—half its time without Provisions, clothing, or pay.

"The flattering prospect which seemed to be opened to our view in the month of May is vanishing like the morning Dew—The States, instead of sending the full number of men required of them by the first of July, and the consignment supplies, have not furnished one half of them yet. And the second division of French troops and their ships not being arrived, nor any certainty when they will, I despair of doing anything in this quarter this campaign—and what may be the consequence if the combined arms of France and Spain are not more prosperous in Europe or the West Indies, I shall leave to others to predict. At best, the troops we have are only fed from hand to mouth, —and for the last four or five days have been without meat.—In short, the limits of a letter would convey very inadequate ideas of our disagreeable situation; and the wretched manner in which our business is being conducted.—I shall not attempt it therefore, but leave it to some future Pen, and a more favorable period for truth to shine."—*Washington to Samuel Washington*, 31 August, 1780.

testify to Congress the grateful sense I have of the cheerful and vigorous exertions of the Committee during their residence with the Army. This I now beg leave to do, and to assure Congress, that I feel myself under the greatest obligations to them for having done all in their power to accomplish the objects of their appointment, and forward the measures, which the good of the service and the exigency of the conjuncture demanded. With perfect respect and esteem I have the honor to be, &c.

TO COUNT DE ROCHAMBEAU.

HEAD-QUARTERS, BERGEN COUNTY,
3 September, 1780.

SIR,

I have been successively honored with your letters of the 25th 28th and 31st of the past month.

A few days ago I moved the army to this place to cover a forage, which we thought it advisable to make in the lower parts of this county, which, by its proximity to New York, has afforded the enemy considerable supplies. Having effected our purpose, we shall to-morrow take a new position on the other side of the Hackensack, about two miles from this and about five miles from the North River, where we shall remain till there is a solution of the present demonstrations of the enemy; as soon as possible after which, I shall do myself the honor to meet you at one of the places you mention. * * *

I have pretty good information, that Sir Henry lately endeavored to engage a person to go to Rhode

Island in the character of a spy, who was to be met by a frigate in some part of the Sound, after having collected all the knowledge he could of your situation, and that of the fleet. The person declined the errand ; but the circumstance leads to a suspicion, that Clinton's movements look your way. I cannot, however, easily persuade myself that this is the case. Nor am I yet satisfied, notwithstanding the appearances are so strong, that he can be making a detachment to the West Indies. In all probability the fate of Jamaica would be decided one way or the other before it could arrive. If the object should be to save the other Islands, a month hence would answer the purpose, as the season will not till the latter end of October admit of operations in the Windward Islands, and New York would be less exposed in the mean time. Indeed I cannot easily believe, that the enemy will venture at this period to make any considerable division of their force at New York. Yet I confess their affairs have somewhat this aspect.

In consequence of the advices brought by the Alliance, I have dismissed the principal part of the Militia, who were called out for three months. From the position of the fleets in Europe, there is reason to apprehend the second division will arrive too late to enable us to avail ourselves of their services, which, with respect to a great part of them, will expire in October. If fortunate events should bring the second division here sooner than I now expect, and in time for an operation against New York, we must assemble all the militia in the neighboring

country, till those more remote can come to our aid. Another inducement for dismissing the Militia is to economize our supplies.

The visit you have had from the indians gives me great pleasure. I felicitate you on that, which you must have had in the company of such agreeable and respectable guests. I dare say the reception they met with will have a good effect. It has been the policy of the English, to discredit the accounts of an alliance between France and America; a conviction of which, on the substantial evidence of your army and fleet, and not less of your presents and good cheer, will not fail to have a happy influence.

I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

[1] It was deemed good policy by General Schuyler and others, that a deputation of Indians should be encouraged to visit the French army and fleet at Newport. Many of the Iroquois Indians had been strongly attached to the French in former times, particularly during the last war, and they still retained a lively remembrance of the amicable intercourse that had then existed. When M. de Vaudreuil surrendered Canada to the British, he gave to the Indians, as tokens of recognisance, a golden crucifix and a watch; and it was supposed, that a renewal of the impressions, which had been in some degree preserved among the tribes by these emblems of friendship, would have the effect to detach them from the influence of the British, and strengthen their union with the Americans and French. For this end their journey to Newport was planned.

General Schuyler, who was at Albany, selected eighteen Indians for this deputation. Thirteen of these were Oneidas and Tuscaroras, and the other five Caghnawagas from the Sault of St. Louis near Montreal. They were accompanied by Mr. Deane, who was thoroughly acquainted with their language. They arrived at Newport on the 29th of August, and were received with a good deal of ceremony and attention by the French commanders. Entertainments and military shows were prepared for them, and they expressed much satisfaction at what they saw and heard. Suitable presents were distributed among them; and to the chiefs were given medals representing the coronation of the French King. When they went away, a written address was delivered to them, or rather a kind of proclamation, signed by Count de

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 6 September, 1780.

SIR,

I cannot forbear expressing my wishes, for the sake of harmony, which our affairs essentially require, that the business of depreciation, so far as it is not to be provided for by the different States, could be a matter of speedy and general arrangement, so as to exhibit at one view all the parties, who are to have their pay made good. For I would beg leave to observe, that the mentioning of one part or class of the army, and postponing another, though they should eventually be placed on the same footing, is the source of uneasiness and of apprehensions that injurious discriminations may obtain; and it is said, that all officers and persons of every description, who have constantly served for a fixed pay, which has not been increased from time to time with the depreciation, stand upon the same principle and are entitled to the same consideration.

I am sorry to inform Congress, that our distresses for meat still continue. The army in general have

Rochambeau, copies of which were to be distributed among the friendly Indians. It was in the following words:

"The King of France, your father, has not forgotten his children. As a token of remembrance I have presented gifts to your deputies in his name. He learned with concern, that many nations, deceived by the English, who are his enemies, had attacked and lifted up the hatchet against his good and faithful allies the United States. He has desired me to tell you, that he is a firm and faithful friend to all the friends of America, and a decided enemy to all its foes. He hopes, that his children, whom he loves sincerely, will take part with their father in this war against the English."

This paper was written in both the French and English languages, and sealed and signed in due form.—*Rochambeau's MS. Letter*, August 31st.—*Sparks.*

been entirely destitute for two and three days, and at most have not drawn more than one day's supply in four or five. Such injury to the discipline of the army, and such distresses to the inhabitants, result from these frequent wants, that my feelings are hurt beyond description at the cries of the one and at seeing the other. Your Excellency's very interesting letter of the 31st, by Mr. Izard, came yesterday to my hands. The event, which its enclosures announce, is an unfortunate one indeed. News of it had arrived in camp from Philadelphia before your despatches were received.[1] I have the honor to be, &c.

[1] The event here alluded to was the total defeat of General Gates' army on the 16th of August, in the battle of Camden. This intelligence was received with the greater disappointment and surprise, as recent accounts had given very flattering prospects of the state of affairs in that quarter.

"Anxious for the public good, I shall continue my unwearied endeavors to stop the progress of the enemy, reinstate our affairs, recommence an offensive war, and recover all our losses in the southern States. But, if being unfortunate is solely a reason sufficient for removing me from command, I shall most cheerfully submit to the orders of Congress, and resign an office, which few generals would be anxious to possess, and where the utmost skill and fortitude are subject to be baffled by difficulties, which must for a time surround the chief in command here. That your Excellency may meet with no such difficulties, that your road to fame and fortune may be smooth and easy, is the sincere wish of your most obedient servant."—*Gates to Washington*, Hillsborough, August 30th.

Again: "Too much honor cannot be paid by Congress to the memory of the Baron de Kalb. He was every thing an excellent officer should be, and in the cause of the United States he has sacrificed his life. If I can yet render good service to the United States, it will be necessary it should be seen, that I have the support of Congress and of your Excellency; otherwise some men may think they please my superiors by blaming me, and thus recommend themselves to favor. But you, Sir, will be too generous to lend an ear to such men, if such there be, and will show your greatness of soul rather by protecting than slighting the unfortunate. If, on the contrary, I am not supported, and countenance is given to every one who will speak disrespectfully of me, it it will be better of Congress to remove me at once from command, where I shall be unable to render them any good service. This, Sir, I submit to your

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL WAYNE.

[PRIVATE.]

HEAD-QUARTERS, 6 September, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I have received your letter of the 3d, and return you my warmest thanks for your professions of friendship. They are the more pleasing, as I am convinced they are founded in the strictest sincerity, and I hope it is needless for me to tell you at this time, that an equal regard for you prevails on my part. I am concerned, however, that you should have given yourself the trouble of writing me on the subject of your letter. I did not want any assurances or any proofs upon the point, because I entertain no idea, that you encouraged the unhappy measure, to which you allude, and which I wish to be buried in oblivion. Your former assurances, your anxiety to which I was a witness, the interesting part you took to compromise and settle the matter, were sufficient to remove every belief of the sort.

I do not know with certainty the person to whom you allude, as having attempted to injure you ; but,

candor and honor, and shall cheerfully await the decision of my superiors. With the warmest wishes for your prosperity, and the sincerest sentiments of esteem and regard, I am, &c."—September 3d.

A council of general officers was held on the 6th of September, and the Commander-in-chief, after stating to them the condition and prospects of the army, requested them to send to him, in writing, their opinions respecting the plan of operations that ought to be pursued. The result was an almost unanimous voice, that it was not advisable to make any attempt against New York, till the second French division should arrive, or till there should be a naval superiority to coöperate with the movements on land. Several of the officers recommended detachments to the southward, and some of them thought that the southern army should be supported at all events.

from what I have heard, and not without much pain, it is probable I could conjecture who it is. If I am not mistaken with respect to the person I mean, I can with the greatest truth assure you, that he never mentioned a syllable to me in his life injurious to you, in the least possible degree, nor have I any reason to believe that he ever did to any Gentleman of my family. The bare report of a coolness, which is said to subsist between you and the Gentleman I have in view, has given me great concern, because I have a warm friendship for both, and consider harmony essential to our interest. There is nothing, if he is the person, which would give me more pleasure than to hear that you were in perfect amity again. Let it be the case; Let all differences subside; the situation of our affairs never required it more; and in the Emphatical terms of your and General Irvine's Letter, of which you enclosed a copy, Let all be as a band of Brothers, and rise superior to every injury, whether real or imaginary, and persevere in the arduous but glorious struggle in which we are engaged, till Peace and Independence shall be secured to our Country. I am certain you will do it; and I will only add, that I am, with the most perfect regard, yours, &c.[1]

[1] A promotion of an officer in the Pennsylvania line, which was thought by the other officers to be unjust to their claims had excited a ferment among them, threatening the most alarming consequences to the whole army. General Wayne and General Irvine had used all their efforts to quell the storm, which, by the aid of the Commander-in-chief, had proved successful. It had been reported to General Wayne, that some persons had insidiously represented him as being at the bottom of the affair, and as acting a treacherous part. This was the subject of his letter, to which the above was a reply.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, BERGEN COUNTY,
8 September, 1780.

SIR,

Since the letter, which I did myself the honor to write Congress the 20th ulto, I have been more attentively considering the import of the resolutions of the 5th of August, and am at a loss to satisfy myself as to the precise extent, whether it be meant to authorize me to extend my views beyond the present Campaign, and even to apply to the Ministers of France and Spain in Europe, or only to concert plans for the present fall and winter with the Ministers and officers of those powers on the continent, or in the West Indies. The latter appeared to me the most natural construction, and was the one I had adopted; but intimations have been given to me, by particular Gentlemen, that Congress understood the resolve in the first sense. If I have been mistaken in my interpretation, I request to have the resolve explained in a full and explicit manner. If I am right no explanation will be necessary.[1] I also take the liberty to request to be informed whether Congress, in two or three Months from the present period, can rely on being able to furnish specie or bills on Europe for the maintenance of a body of four or five thousand men in a country, where the paper of these States will not serve as a Currency.

I should also be glad, if Congress will have the good-

[1] This was probably the view of the matter taken by Congress, as no explanation has been found.

ness to assist me with some lights how far the States of South and North Carolina have ability to contribute to the support of an army in the articles of Bread, Meat, Forage, Horses, and wagons. I suppose an army to be there, sufficient to secure to us the full command of them.

I entreat as speedy an answer as possible on these points, which are of the greatest consequence in determining our future plans; particularly I wish for immediate information on the subject of money. But the basis of every plan we can form is an army, and the means of subsistence. Without immediate measures to supply the places of the men, who leave us by the first of January, we shall scarcely have any thing that deserves the name of one. Our whole efficient force in this quarter will then probably be less than six thousand men. In proposing plans of coöperation, I must engage that something specific shall be performed on our part. Congress will be sensible, that I cannot do this as to any plan of future execution, when I know that our army will be reduced one half in less than four months, and when, so far from being certain that we shall have it in our power to replace the men in time, I do not even know what measures will be attempted for the purpose, nor when they will be undertaken. The honor of Congress and of the States, as well as my own reputation, forbid me to enter into engagements, which I have no assurance of our being able to fulfil. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO COUNT DE ROCHAMBEAU.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 8 September, 1780.

SIR,

The great preparations of General Clinton have hitherto resulted in nothing more, than the sailing of a fleet of about ninety vessels of different sizes for Europe with a few invalids. We are however still amused with rumors of an embarkation; but these now go upon a new and more probable ground, a descent upon Virginia. We have just received the most disagreeable advices from General Gates, of a defeat of the army under his command near Camden in South Carolina the 16th of last month, in which the greatest part of his best troops were cut off. We have not yet the details. This event must have the worst effect upon the affairs of the Southern States. Nor is it easy to say how far its influence may extend. It is on this account, I should not be astonished if the enemy should really make a detachment of three or four thousand men to Virginia.[1]

If convenient to you, I have the honor to propose the 20th instant for our interview at Hartford, where I hope we shall be able to combine some plan of future operation, which events will enable us to

[1] General Washington wrote to General Heath: "I should have been very glad, had the situation of the works, which Count de Rochambeau is constructing for the defence of the Island, admitted of the immediate dismission of the three months' Massachusetts militia; but, as it does not, and as the Count seems very desirous of completing them, we cannot but consent to their staying out their term of service, should it be necessary. I make no doubt but the State will do every thing possible to accommodate the French troops, should circumstances require them to take up their winter-quarter in Rhode Island." —September 8th.

execute. Our plans, however, can only turn upon possibilities; which is the more unfortunate, as the affairs of this country absolutely require activity, on whatever side they are viewed. I intend to conceal here the time of the intended interview. I dare say you will think it advisable to do the same on your part. I had the pleasure of receiving last night your letter of the 3d instant. I am, &c.

P. S. I have also recd. your letter of the 26th, and am happy to find my despatches have all got safe. The Marquis de la Fayette & the Commandant of Artillery & Engineers will accompany me.

TO JOHN MATHEWS, IN CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 9 September, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I have heard that a new arrangement is about to take place in the Medical Department, and that it is likely it will be a good deal curtailed with respect to many of its present appointments. Who will be the persons generally employed I am not informed, nor do I wish to know. However, I will mention to you that I think Drs. Cochran and Craik, from their services, abilities, experience, and close attention, have the justest claim to their Country's notice, and to be among the first Officers in the Establishment. Doctors Latimer, Tilton, Hagan, and Townshend, who are now senior surgeons, are also Gentlemen of great merit, and have a just claim to be continued, from their abilities, attention, and other considerations.

They are all single men, and therefore, being otherwise well qualified, are the most eligible. I have received too the most favorable reports of the merits and attention of Dr. Jenifer, a Junior Surgeon, who is in the same situation. A Dr. Craigie, the present Apothecary-General, a Gentleman not personally known to me, has been reported to me as very deserving of the appointment.

The several Gentlemen I have mentioned, as I have observed, appear to me to have the fairest pretensions to the public esteem, and, if they are honored with proper places, I am satisfied the public will be greatly benefited by their services. There are many other Gentlemen in the Department, whom I have omitted to name. The reason of my mentioning these particularly proceeds from a hint given me, that the new arrangement might possibly be influenced by a spirit of party out of doors, which would not operate in their favor. I will add no more, than that I am, dear Sir, with the most perfect regard, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL LINCOLN.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 10 September, 1780.

SIR,

By a letter I have received from Sir Henry Clinton, of the 4th Instant, I find that the interview, which has been proposed between you and General Phillips, is to take place on the 19th of the month at Elizabeth Town. I presume Sir Henry Clinton informed you of this by the letter I now transmit; and

I need not add, that it will give me the highest pleasure, if you can effect your exchange, either for Major-General Phillips or Major-General de Riedesel.

From the prospect I had, founded on the correspondence which I had seen, that there would be a meeting between you and General Phillips on the subject of your exchange, and the earnest desire I had of extending this business still farther, I was induced to inform Sir Henry Clinton, by a letter of the 26th ulto., that "I should direct our Commissary of prisoners to be present at the time, who would be instructed to execute with the Commissary on his part, if he should think proper to send him, an exchange of Officers, prisoners of War, on the footing of equal rank or composition, so far as the number in our hands would admit, and to include also the whole of the Officers of convention now on parole at New York or in Europe." General Clinton has answered my letter, and informed me, that "His Commissary of prisoners should attend." I shall accordingly order Mr. Skinner, our Deputy Commissary of prisoners to be at Elizabeth Town on the 19th, who will be fully instructed to carry my propositions to Sir Henry Clinton into execution. The business, as to the main points, will rest on the most simple footing, and such as Mr. Skinner is perfectly acquainted with. He has also a familiar knowledge of the few more particular cases, which can arise on the occasion, as he has been long in office, and has not only had repeated instructions, but has acted upon the subject. From these considerations, I will not give you any

trouble in the matter, more than to wish you to interest General Phillips, as far as you can with propriety, if you should find it necessary to promote and countenance the exchanges, which are mutually interesting to both parties. Before you set out for Elizabeth Town, I will show you the instructions, Mr. Skinner will receive. I am, &c.[1]

TO COUNT DE GUICHEN.

HEAD-QUARTERS, BERGEN COUNTY,
12 September, 1780.

SIR,

The Marquis De la Fayette arrived in America in May last, charged by the Court of France to announce to me its intention to send a fleet and army to co-operate with the troops of these States. Foreseeing that this succor would not have the intended effect, from an insufficiency of the naval force, which would probably be found inferior to the enemy, I requested the Marquis to represent to you the situation of affairs on this Continent, the necessity of an active

[1] A meeting took place at Elizabethtown, according to the tenor of the above letter, between General Lincoln and General Phillips; but the parties could not agree, and nothing was effected, either in regard to the personal exchange of these two officers, or a general exchange proposed in the instructions to Mr. Skinner. There was a misunderstanding as to the object of the interview. General Phillips had got the idea, that he and General Lincoln were to discuss the whole subject of exchanges, and also the appointment of commissaries to reside with the respective armies, and said he went out with powers to that extent; whereas General Lincoln had no other authority than to make an arrangement for his own exchange. "I shall decline giving any opinion upon this fruitless meeting," said General Phillips in a letter to General Washington, "but I must be allowed to acknowledge my extreme surprise, that it should be conceived by any person necessary for General Lincoln and myself to confer

campaign, and the great utility of a detachment from your fleet to reinforce the one expected from Europe, and give efficacy to the generous intentions of your Court. I was persuaded, that, if it were compatible with your instructions and the plans in contemplation in the Islands, you would cheerfully afford your assistance in a coöperation so necessary to this country, so beneficial of the common interest. * * *

It appears since to have been the intention of your court to send a larger succor than was at first mentioned, and that a second division was to have followed that, which has arrived at Rhode Island. The late advices, however, from Europe show, that the execution of this project will at least be suspended by the appearance of the British fleet off the port of Brest; and there is little hope that the second division can arrive in time to undertake any operations against the enemy in this part of the Continent.

The Chevalier de Ternay has informed you of his being blocked in the port of Rhode Island by a superior British fleet; and the French troops are of course

upon the matter of his partial and personal exchange, which depended so entirely and absolutely upon Sir Henry Clinton and your Excellency, and might have been settled by the receipt and return of a letter on either side."—*Elizabethtown*, September 23d. The mistake was on the part of Sir Henry Clinton, because, in his letter on the subject of the meeting for an exchange of prisoners, he had said that Mr. Loring, the commissary, would be sent out for the purpose, and had not mentioned General Phillips as being designed to take any other part, than that of concerting his own exchange with General Lincoln. He wrote a letter to Washington dated the 19th, the day on which the meeting took place, stating that he had entrusted General Phillips with full powers respecting the business of exchange. But General Washington was absent when the letter arrived in camp, nor was it received till it was too late to send similar powers to General Lincoln.—*Sparks*.

under a necessity of remaining there for the security of the fleet against a combined attack by sea and land. Nor indeed could they be more useful to us in any other position, a naval superiority being essential to every enterprise in these States. In consequence of the expected aid, great exertions have been made on our part for offensive operations. An additional expense, immense to this country in its present exhausted state, has been incurred; great expectations have been excited among the people; and if events do not permit us to derive correspondent advantages, the disappointment will no doubt be attended with effects very injurious to our affairs. * * *

The situation of America at this time is critical. The government is without finances. Its paper credit sunk, and no expedients it can adopt capable of retrieving it. The resources of the country much diminished by a five years' war, in which it has made efforts beyond its ability. Clinton, with an army of ten thousand regular troops (aided by a considerable body of militia, whom, from motives of fear and attachment, he has engaged to take arms), in possession of one of our capital towns, and a large part of the State to which it belongs. The savages desolating the frontiers. A fleet, superior to that of our allies, not only protects the enemy against any attempts of ours, but to facilitate those, which he may project against us. Lord Cornwallis, with seven or eight thousand men, in complete possession of two States, Georgia and South Carolina; a third, by recent misfortunes, at his mercy. His force is

daily increasing by an accession of adherents, whom his successes naturally procure in a country inhabited a great part by emigrants from England and Scotland, who have not been long enough transplanted to exchange their ancient habits and attachments in favor of their new residence.

By a letter received from General Gates, we learn that, on the 16th of last month, attempting to penetrate and regain the State of South Carolina, he met with a total defeat near Camden, in which many of his troops have been cut off, and the remainder dispersed, with the loss of all their cannon and baggage. The enemy are said to be now making a detachment from New York for a Southern destination. If they push their successes in that quarter, there is no saying where their career may end. The opposition will be feeble, unless we can give succor from hence, which, from a variety of causes, must depend on a naval superiority.

In addition to the representation made to you by the Marquis De la Fayette, the Chevalier de Ternay has done me the honor to impart to me that he has also applied to you for a reinforcement to put him in condition to act. Though I have entire confidence, that the steps already taken will determine you to give us all the assistance, which your situation and the plans you have formed will permit, yet, as the Honorable the Congress have lately thought proper to vest me with full power to concert with the officers of his Most Christian and Catholic Majesties any enterprises, which appear to me advantageous to the

common cause, it becomes my duty to address you immediately myself, and to expose to you the dangers and difficulties we experience in the present posture of our affairs, that you may judge how essential your assistance would be to us at this juncture.

I write to you with that confidence and candor, which ought to subsist between allies and between military men. In my eye the interests of France and America are the same, and to conceal our embarrassments would be to betray both. While I assure you, that the latter stands in need of the most vigorous assistance of its friends, I entreat you to believe, that I am as remote from exaggerating as from palliating, and that I do not heighten the picture from a partiality to our own interest. The Chevalier de la Luzerne, whom I shall beg to transmit you this letter in ciphers, will, I doubt not, add his testimony to mine. To propose at this time a plan of precise coöperation would be fruitless. I shall only observe in general, that any succor you can send in consequence of this letter must arrive too late for an enterprise against New York; but an unequivocal naval superiority would, I hope, enable us to act decisively in the Southern extremity.

The 20th instant is appointed for an interview with Count de Rochambeau and the Chevalier de Ternay, in which we shall probably combine several plans, dependent for their execution on different contingencies. One of these will be the arrival of a detachment from your fleet. Convinced as I am, that the independence of America is the primary object of

the war with your Court, it is unnecessary to offer any other motives to engage your exertions in our favor. I might otherwise remark, that the destruction of the enemy here would greatly facilitate the reduction of their Islands. Supplies in much greater abundance, and on much better terms, might then be drawn from hence to forward your operations there; and these States, disencumbered of an internal war, might unite their inhabitants and resources in vigorous efforts against the common enemy elsewhere, for the benefit of the common cause. I am happy in this opportunity in congratulating you on the advantages, you have reaped in your different combats, as glorious to the flag of France, as humiliating to that of Britain. My happiness will be complete, if the coasts of this Continent should add to your laurels. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO THE CHEVALIER DE LA LUZERNE.

HEAD-QUARTERS, BERGEN COUNTY,
12 September, 1780.

SIR,

I have the honor to inclose you a letter, which, upon the whole, I have thought it advisable to write to the Count De Guichen. As its contents are of a nature to make its falling into the enemy's hands in

[1] The Chevalier de Ternay wrote also to Count de Guichen, requesting him to send four ships of the line to the coast of the United States; but he had left the West Indies and sailed for France before the letters arrived. M. de Monteil, his successor, could not decipher them, and of course no reinforcements were forwarded from the fleet.

M. de Ternay was not well satisfied at this time with his situation and prospects. In writing to Count de Vergennes he said: "I think that the squadron of the King, and his army, have not arrived at the most advantageous point for effecting any important operation on the American continent. The in-

its present form dangerous, and as I have no cipher of communication with the Count, I take the liberty to request your Excellency's assistance in making use of yours, and forwarding it by triplicates with your despatches by the first opportunities. I make no mention of a land force, because, though it would be useful, it may be dispensed with. But if a body of troops could conveniently accompany the fleets, it would give greater energy and certainty of success to our operations. I am the more induced to desire it, as the composition of a considerable part of our army is temporary, and I am not informed what measures may be taken to replace the men, whose time of service will expire.

I need use no arguments to convince your Excellency of the extremity to which our affairs are tending, and the necessity of support. You are an eye-witness to all our perplexities and all our wants. You know the dangerous consequences of leaving the enemy in quiet possession of their Southern conquests, either for negotiation this winter, or a continuance of the war. You know our inability alone to expel them, or perhaps even to stop their career. I have the honor to be, with the sincerest sentiments of respect, &c.

feriority of means seems to require, that we should be at a greater distance from the place where the enemy concentrate their forces. We are actually compelled to remain on a very strict defensive. The English squadron is superior in number and in every other respect. The fate of North America is yet very uncertain, and the revolution is not so far advanced, as it has been believed in Europe."—*MS. Letter*, Rhode Island, September 10th.

At Hartford, Lafayette, Knox, and the commanding officers of the corps of Engineers were to accompany Washington, with an escort of twelve or fifteen dragoons.

TO JOHN RUTLEDGE, GOVERNOR OF SOUTH CAROLINA.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 12 September, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I had the pleasure a few days ago of receiving your Excellency's favor of the 27th August from Philadelphia. I am extremely sorry that circumstances did not admit of your intended visit to the Army, as I could, in a personal conference, have entered more minutely into a detail of our affairs than I can, with safety, commit to paper.

Your Excellency may rest assured that I am fully impressed with the importance of the southern States, and of course with the necessity of making every effort to expel the enemy from them. The late unlucky affair near Camden renders their situation more precarious, and calls for every exertion to stop, at least, the further progress of the British army. It is to be wished, that the composition of our force in this quarter, our resources, and the present situation of the fleet and army of our ally admit of an immediate and sufficient detachment, not only to answer the purpose I have just mentioned, but to carry on operations of a more serious and extensive nature. But this not being the case, for reasons which must be obvious to you, let it suffice that your Excellency be informed, that our views tend ultimately to the southward.

In the mean time, our endeavors in that quarter should be directed rather to checking the progress of the enemy by a permanent, compact, and well organized body of men, than attempting immediately to

recover the State of South Carolina by a numerous army of militia, who, besides being inconceivably expensive, are too fluctuating and undisciplined to oppose one composed chiefly of regular troops. I would recommend to you, therefore, to make use of your influence with the States from Maryland southward, to raise without delay at least five thousand men, for the war if it can be effected, if not, for as long a time as possible. These, with the militia in the vicinity, would answer the purpose I have last mentioned, and would in proper time make a useful body, either to form a diversion in favor of, or to coöperate with, a force upon the coast.

I have hinted the outlines of a plan to your Excellency, which for many reasons should be in general kept to yourself. You will oblige me by informing yourself as accurately as possible, what may be the present resources of the country, as to meat, corn, wheat, or rice, and transportation, as I suppose circumstances may have occasioned a considerable change. And if it is possible to form magazines of either, it should be done, especially of salt meat, which is an article so essential to military operations, that the States of Virginia and North Carolina should be requested to lay up, as soon as the weather will permit, at least four thousand barrels in proportion to their respective abilities. You will also be pleased to endeavor to gain a knowledge of the force of the enemy, the posts they occupy, the nature and state of those posts, and the reinforcements they may probably derive from the people of the country.

As you receive these several intelligences, you will be pleased to communicate them to me, with your opinion of the best place for debarking Troops, in case of an Expedition against the enemy in the southern States, and the names of Persons in that Quarter, whose opinion and advice may be serviceable in such an event. With much esteem and regard, I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, NEW BRIDGE,
15 September, 1780.

SIR,

I am honored with your letters of the 6th and 8th instant with their inclosures—happy to find, that the late disaster in Carolina has not been so great as its first features indicated. This event, however, adds itself to many others, to exemplify the necessity of an army,—the fatal consequences of depending on militia. Regular troops alone are equal to the exigencies of modern war, as well for defence as offence; and whenever a substitute is attempted, it must prove illusory and ruinous.—No *Militia* will ever acquire the habits necessary to resist a regular force. Even those nearest the seat of War are only valuable as light troops to be scattered in the woods, and plague rather than do serious injury to the enemy. The firmness requisite for the real business of fighting is only to be attained by a constant course of discipline and service. I have never yet

been witness to a single instance, that can justify a different opinion; and it is most earnestly to be wished, the liberties of America may no longer be trusted, in any material degree, to so precarious a dependence.

I cannot but remark, that it gives me pain to find the measures pursuing at the southward still turn upon accumulating large bodies of militia, instead of once for all making a decided effort to have a permanent force. In my ideas of the true system of war to the southward, the object ought to be to have a good army rather than a large one. Every exertion should be made by North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware, to raise a permanent force of six thousand men, exclusive of Horse and Artillery. These, with the occasional aid of the Militia in the vicinity of the scene of action, will not only suffice to prevent the further progress of the enemy, but, if properly supplied, to oblige them to compact their force and relinquish a part of what they may now hold. To expel them from the Country intirely is what we cannot aim at, till we derive more effectual support from abroad; and by attempting too much, instead of going forward, we shall go backward. Could such a force be once on foot, it would immediately make an inconceivable change in the face of our affairs,—in the opposition to the enemy, expense, consumption of provision, waste of arms, stores, &c. No magazines can be equal to the demands of an army of militia, and none ever needed economy more than ours.

Speaking of Magazines, I beg leave to observe, that it is of infinite importance to endeavor to establish ample ones in the Southern States. I mean more particularly of provisions, not only with a view to an immediate supply of the troops there, but also with a view to offensive operations in that quarter. A quantity of salt provision would be of great utility. It is deplorable that, if other circumstance suited our wishes, we cannot reasonably undertake any thing for want of provisions. Here the Country might, on an emergency, afford temporary supplies for a much larger force than we have; but, if we should find it eligible to turn our attention to the Southward, we should in all appearance meet with an insuperable obstacle in the want of a sufficiency of provision for the voyage, and for the operations previous to our opening a full communication with the Country. In the course of the present month, the army here has had scarcely one third of the established rations of meat; and our distress continues without prospect of relief.

I have the honor to inform Congress, that tomorrow I shall set out for Hartford, to have an interview on the 20th with the Count de Rochambeau and the Chevalier de Ternay.[1] The command of the army in my absence devolves on Major-General Greene. It is with extreme regret that I announce the death of Brigadier-General Poor the 9th instant, an officer of distinguished merit, who, as

[1] He did not in reality set out till Monday the 18th, having been delayed one or two days longer than he expected.

a citizen and a Soldier, had every claim to the esteem of his Country.

I have just seen a resolution of Congress of the 25th of August declaring the invalidity of all certificates not given by the Quarter Master General and Commissary General. As our situation lays us under an absolute necessity of having recourse to these certificates and as the Quarter Master General is not with the Army I have been compelled to direct Colonel Biddle acting Commissary of Forage to continue giving certificates as heretofore for Ten Days or till the arrival of Colonel Pickering—I hope Congress will approve this step, founded on necessity, and will take the necessary measures to authorise the certificates given by Colonel Biddle till the new Quarter Master General joins the army.

I have the honor to be, &c.

P. S. Since writing the above I am honored with your letter of the 12th inclosing Resolutions of the 8th & 11th. It is my duty to inform Congress—that considering the composition of our present force and our present prospects, I do not think it expedient to detach to the Southward from this Army. A little time will explain what we have to expect from abroad—this—the result of the intended conference and the measures Congress take to replace the expiring part of this army will enable me to judge hereafter how far it will be adviseable and practicable to send reinforcements to the Southward.[1]

[1] Read in Congress, September 18th.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE.

INSTRUCTIONS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 16 September, 1780.

To-morrow I set out for Hartford, on an interview with the French General and Admiral. In my absence, the command of the army devolves upon you. I have so entire confidence in your prudence and abilities, that I leave the conduct of it to your discretion, with only one observation, that, with our present prospects, it is not our business to seek an action, or accept it, but on advantageous terms. You will attend to the post at Dobbs's Ferry, and take such precautions for its security, as you judge necessary. As Lt.-Col. Gouvion accompanies me, a Continental Officer should be appointed to the Command. There is now a lt.-col. of Militia there.

Should you receive authentic advice of the arrival of a superior French fleet on the Coast, you will immediately put the army under marching orders, and take measures for collecting all the boats on the North River, together with plank, &c., to form a bridge across Haerlem River. You will also immediately write to the States of Maryland, Delaware, Pensylvania, Jersey, and New York, informing them of the advice you have received, and urging them to redouble their exertions for collecting provisions, forage, &c., to raise levies for their Continental batalions ; and also to put their nearest Militia under marching Orders. You will acquaint me with every occurrence of importance, that comes to your knowledge, by the rout which Colo. Tilghman will point out ; and any thing, that it may be interesting for Congress immediately to know, you will transmit to them. I am, &c.[1]

[1] The morning orders on the 17th were issued in the name of General Washington. The following are General Greene's "*after-orders*" for the same day : "His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, going to be absent from the army a few days, the knowledge of which may possibly reach the enemy, and encourage them to make some movement in consequence thereof ; the General desires the officers of all ranks to be in perfect readiness to meet them on the shortest notice, and recommends to the out-guards to be very vigilant and attentive, and the patrols active and watchful."

"I shall be at Peekskill on Sunday evening, on my way to Hartford, to meet the French Admiral and General. You will be pleased to send down a

P. S.—Since writing the foregoing instructions I have received advices that Admiral Rodney is at the Hook, and that the enemy are making an embarkation for Rhode Island. If this should be true, on the sailing of the embarkation, you will immediately make all the preparations we did on a like occasion for attacking New York, and give me instant intelligence of the event. If the detachment should be such as to enable you to pass the River with safety at Dobbs ferry, it will save you a march, if not, you will cross the North River at Kings ferry.

TO ABRAHAM SKINNER, DEPUTY COMMISSARY-GENERAL OF PRISONERS.

INSTRUCTIONS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 17 September, 1780.

SIR,

It having been agreed that an interview should take place at Elizabethtown between Major-Generals Phillips and Lincoln on the subject of their exchange, I was induced, from the earnest desire I had of relieving the Prisoners on both sides, so far as circumstances would admit, and in compliance with the directions of Congress, to inform His Excellency Sir Henry Clinton on the 26th ulto., that "I should direct our Commissary of Prisoners to attend at Elizabethtown at the same time, who would be instructed to execute with the Commissary on his part, if he should think proper to send him, an exchange of Officers, Prisoners of War, on the footing of equal rank, or composition, as far as the number in our hands would admit, and to include also the whole of the Officers of Convention on parole at New York, or in Europe." The interview between the two Generals is to be on the 19th Instant, when Sir Henry Clinton has informed me in answer to my letter, that "His Commissary should attend."

You will, therefore, proceed to Elizabethtown, on the 19th

guard of a Captain and 50 at that time, and direct the q'rmaster to endeavor to have a night's forage for about forty Horses. You will keep this to yourself, as I want to make my journey a secret."—*Washington to Major-General Arnold*, 14 September, 1780.

Instant, and meet the Commissary on the part of Sir Henry Clinton, or other Officer deputed by him, with whom you will make, or endeavor to make, under the restrictions and exceptions heretofore mentioned, an Exchange of *all* the Enemy's *Officers*, who *are prisoners of War* in our hands, and also of all the Officers of *Convention* on parole in *New York*, or *in Europe*, for an equal number of ours of like rank, according to the order of their captivity ; and, when the principle of equal rank will not apply, you will exchange them on the footing of composition ; confining the composition to Officers *only ;* and according to the value or tariff treated of and judged reasonable by the Commissioners at the last meeting at Amboy. In the Exchanges on the principle of composition, our Officers next in rank to those belonging to the Enemy's Army, who cannot be exchanged on the principle of equality, are to be included, and in the order of their captivity.

The above are the general rules, by which you are to conduct yourself in the execution of the proposed business, and which are to operate *only* in general with respect to our Officers, prisoners in this quarter, and for their benefit, whose long captivity gives them a claim to the public's first attention. There is, however, besides the exchange, which it is hoped Major-Genl. Lincoln will effect of himself, either for Major-General Phillips or Major-Genl. Riedesel, and which falls within the principle of equality, the case of Brigadr.-Genl. Duportail, whose release, being particularly directed by Congress, must be attempted and effected, either upon one or other of the foregoing principles, tho' it would be best if it could be obtained on that of composition. The case of Lt.-Colo. Ramsay and Connolly is also to be particularly attended to, for the reasons formerly given you, and likewise Col. Webb's, if the several officers taken in the Eagle packet are comprehended in your transactions, & which, upon every principle of justice, ought to be the case. If there are any other instances of Exchanges out of the general and customary line, about which you have received any orders from Congress or the Board of War, you must of course regard them and comply with their directions, or at least endeavor to carry them into execution.

You are perfectly acquainted with all the circumstances respecting Violators of parole, and know who have been adjudged such,

and who have not, and the order and manner in which they are to be accounted ; and also the characters for whom we do not conceive ourselves accountable. It is therefore unnecessary for me to observe further with respect to these, than that the Instructions, you have had repeatedly concerning them, are to govern you on the present occasion. We have in Canada a Lieut.-Colonel Stacey, a prisoner belonging to the Massachusetts line, who was taken at Cherry Valley on the 11th of November, 1778. He is to be added to your list of lt.-colonels, and exchanged whenever it comes to his turn, having regard to the time of his captivity. You will also recollect the captains, who are Hostages, and endeavor at their release.

An exchange of *all* the Officers, prisoners of War in our hands, and also of *all* the Convention Officers on parole in *New York* or *Europe*, is what is earnestly wished. But if you find you cannot make it so general as to comprehend the whole, make it as extensive as you can. You will report your proceedings to me and the Exchanges you may make, specifying the names and ranks of the Officers on both sides. I have mentioned your Instructions to Major-General Lincoln, who will facilitate the execution of the Objects to which they extend, as far as he can, by endeavoring to get General Phillips to countenance the business either wholly or partially, if it should be necessary. * * *

I am, dear Sir, &c.[1]

CONFERENCE AT HARTFORD.

22 September, 1780.

1st. That there can be no decisive enterprise against the maritime establishments of the English in this country, without a constant naval superiority.

[1] Mr. Skinner met the British commissary, but they could not agree upon any plan of exchange within the range of the above instructions. Mr. Loring, the British commissary, said the proposals would be accepted if the privates then prisoners in New York were included. On the 8th of October, General Washington wrote to Sir Henry Clinton : "This is perfectly agreeable to me, and I have accordingly directed our commissary to take the most effectual and immediate measures to carry into execution the exchange as well of those privates as of the officers."

2d. That of all the enterprises which may be undertaken, the most important and decisive is the reduction of New York, which is the centre and focus of all the British forces.

3. That under whatever point of view we consider the establishment which the English have made since five years at New York, & with a garrison of fifteen thousand men that place requires extensive means to make the siege of it—That with a decided maritime superiority to block Sandy Hook and fight at sea all the succors which may come from without during the course of the expedition, there must be also a land army of thirty thousand men, which may form two attacks on the works in New York and Long Island ; and that we must calculate on an Army of fifteen thousand men being able to make sorties with six or 8 thousand men ; that therefore each attack must be defended and garnished in proportion—That if we should be reduced to have no more than 24,000 men, then we must content ourselves with a single attack, which however renders the operation less expeditious and more uncertain.

4. That every enterprise whether to the Southward or Northward exacts the same superiority by land and sea ; since the troops which at present occupy the different posts may be reinforced by the fleet and army at New York, in proportion to the detachments which might be sent to attack them.

5. That we ought therefore to prefer the attack of New York to every other so soon as the King by his succors shall have enabled his allies to undertake it.

6. That in the state of the French fleet and army hitherto since their arrival, they have been obliged to remain on the strictest defensive and consider it as a happiness to have suffered no check.

7. That there results from all these considerations an indispensable necessity to reinforce the fleet and army here with ships, troops and money.

8. That the number of ships for obtaining the naval superiority cannot possibly be fixed, since it must depend on the secrecy and the point from which they set out ; but that the only means of having that superiority, seeing that the English can detach from Europe in proportion to the Force, is to detach from the Islands in the month of April a fleet to reinforce the one here and give it

a superiority—The Court of France can alone determine the number of vessels to be detached from Europe and from the Islands, as it cannot be known in America what number of vessels the enemy will be able to send here.

9. That in the circumstances in which General Washington finds himself—not having yet been able to combine with Congress the force of his army for the commencement of the next campaign, and not having yet received from Congress an answer concerning the means proposed to take to replace that part of his army whose times of service expire in January—he should fear to hazard a specification of the number of which the Congress will compose his army for the next spring; but that he thinks it very necessary, that His Christian Majesty be pleased to complete his army here to fifteen thousand, and that he hopes the States by a new effort will be able to supply the rest.

10. That independent of the funds destined for the army of fifteen thousand men; which will be insufficient, if they are combined on the same scale by which the speculation for five thousand men was regulated—without having foreseen the extraordinary expence attending a war in this country, where each individual neither gives his house nor his field to encamp in without being paid for it in hand; it is indispensable to add extra funds to supply the contingencies which cannot be foreseen; in order not to be stopped in the midst of an expedition once commenced.

TO COLONEL WADE, AT WEST POINT.

HEAD-QUARTERS, ROBINSON'S HOUSE,
25 September, 1780.[1]

SIR,

General Arnold is gone to the Enemy. I have just now received a line from him, enclosing one to

[1] According to his previous arrangements Washington left the camp on the 18th of September, and the same evening crossed the Hudson at King's Ferry. Arnold went down the river, and met him there, but returned the next morning to Robinson's House. Washington pursued his journey to Hartford, had an interview with the French commanders as proposed, and reached West Point in the morning of the 25th, on his way back to camp. Meantime André had been captured, and Arnold had deserted to the enemy.

Mrs. Arnold, dated on board the Vulture. From this circumstance, and Colo. Lamb's being detached on some business, the command of the Garrison, for the present, devolves on you. I request, you will be as vigilant as possible; and, as the Enemy may have it in contemplation to attempt some enterprise, even to-night, against these posts, I wish you to make, immediately after receipt of this, the best disposition you can of your force, so as to have a proportion of men in each work on the west side of the River. You will see me or hear from me further to-morrow.

I am, dear Sir, &c.[1]

[1] "From some intelligence I have received, I think it necessary, that the Regiment at present under your command should march without a moment's delay. You will therefore, I request, on receipt of this, put it in motion, and with one half you will occupy the north and middle redoubt on the Heights above this place, as soon as possible. The other half of the Regiment will proceed to the landing-place above Mandeville's, near the old Connecticut encampment, and will cross the river, immediately after their arrival to West Point."—*Washington to Lieutenant-Colonel Ebenezer Gray*, 7 o'clock P.M., 25 September, 1780.

"I wish to see you here immediately, and request that you will come without the least delay."—*Washington to Col. James Livingston*, 25 September, 1780.

He also wrote to the officer commanding a wood-cutting party at Staatsburg: "I request that you will, on receipt of this, march with the wood-cutting detachment under your command to Fishkill, where you will remain till further orders." To Major Low, of the Massachusetts levies, who was stationed at Fishkill, he wrote: "You will be pleased to march early to-morrow morning with all the militia under your command, and proceed to the landing opposite to West Point. You will send an officer to this place, by whom you will receive further orders. Colonel Gouvion, the bearer of this, will apply to you for an officer and a small party of men. These you will furnish." Colonel Gouvion was sent to arrest Joshua H. Smith, who was then at Fishkill, and the guard was destined for that object, and to conduct him to West Point. To General Greene, then at Tappan, he wrote:

"I request, that you will put the division on the left in motion as soon as possible, with orders to proceed to King's Ferry, when, or before they arrive there, they will be met with further orders. The division will come on light,

TO LIEUTENANT-COLONEL JOHN JAMESON.

ROBINSON'S HOUSE,
25 September, 7 o'clock, P.M., 1780.

SIR,

I wish every precaution and attention to be paid, to prevent Major André from making his escape.[1] He will, without doubt effect it if possible; and, in order that he may not have it in his power, you will send him under the care of such a party and so many officers, as to preclude him from the least opportunity of doing it. That he may be less liable to be recaptured by the enemy, who will no doubt make every effort to gain him, he had better be conducted *to this place* by some upper road, rather than by the route thro' Crompond. I would not wish Mr. André to be treated with insult; but he does not appear to stand upon the footing of a common prisoner

leaving their heavy baggage to follow. You will also hold all the troops in readiness to move on the shortest notice. Transactions of a most interesting nature, and such as will astonish you, have been just discovered."

As soon as the escape of Arnold was ascertained, Hamilton was despatched from Robinson's House to Verplanck's Point, with orders to intercept and seize Arnold, should he not already have passed below King's Ferry. In writing to Washington, after his arrival at Verplanck's Point, Hamilton said;

"You will see by the enclosed, that we are too late. Arnold went by water to the Vulture. I shall write to General Greene, advising him, without making a bustle, to be in readiness to march, and even to detach a brigade this way; for, though I do not believe the project will go on, it is possible Arnold has made such dispositions with the garrison, as may tempt the enemy in its present weakness to make the stroke this night, and it seems prudent to be providing against it. I shall endeavor to find Meigs, and request him to march to the garrison; and shall make some arrangements here. I hope your Excellency will approve these steps, as there may be no time to be lost."—*MS. Letter*, September 25th.

[1] A letter written by Major André in his own name to General Washington, on the 24th of September, had been received before the date of the above letter.

of war; and therefore he is not entitled to the usual indulgences, they receive, and is to be most closely and narrowly watched. General Arnold, before I arrived here, went off to-day to the Enemy, and is on board the Vulture sloop of war. I am, Sir, &c.[1]

André must not escape.

TO GOVERNOR CLINTON.

HEAD-QUARTERS, ROBINSON'S HOUSE,
26 September, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I arrived here yesterday, on my return from an interview with the French general and admiral, and have been witness to a scene of treason, as shocking as it was unexpected. General Arnold, from every circumstance, had entered into a plot for sacrificing West Point. He had an interview with Major André, the British adjutant-general, last week at Joshua H. Smith's, where the plan was concerted. By an extraordinary concurrence of incidents André was taken on his return, with several papers in Arnold's hand-writing, that proved the treason. The latter unluckily got notice of it before I did,[2] went immediately down the river, got on board the Vulture, which brought up André, and proceeded to New York. I found the post in the most critical

[1] Major André and Joshua H. Smith were brought to Robinson's House on the morning of the 26th of September, the former from Colonel Sheldon's quarters in Lower Salem, and the latter from Fishkill. They were sent over separately to West Point the evening of the some day.

[2] Lieutenant-Colonel Jameson had notified Arnold, as his superior officer, of the capture of André.

condition, and have been taking measures to give it security, which I hope will be to-night effectual. With the greatest respect and regard, I have the honor to be, &c.

P. S.—Smith is also in our possession and has confessed facts sufficient to establish his guilt.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HEATH.

ROBINSON'S HOUSE, 26 September, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

In the present situation of things, I think it necessary that you should join the army, and request that you will do it. You will come to head-quarters yourself. The route through Litchfield will be the most eligible for you on account of security, and you may direct your baggage to halt at Fishkill for your further orders. I write to the Count de Rochambeau by this conveyance; and I trust that your coming away now will not be attended with any material inconvenience to him.

I cannot conclude, without informing you of an event, which has happened here, and which will strike you with astonishment and indignation. Major-General Arnold has gone to the enemy. He had had an interview with Major André, adjutant-general of the British army, and had put into his possession a state of our army, of the garrison at this post, of the number of men considered as necessary for the defence of it, a return of the ordnance, and the disposition of the artillery corps, in case of an alarm. By a

most providential interposition, Major André was taken in returning to New York, with all those papers in General Arnold's handwriting, who, hearing of the matter, kept it secret, and left his quarters immediately, under pretence of going over to West Point on Monday forenoon, about an hour before my arrival; then pushed down the river in the barge, which was not discovered till I had returned from West Point in the afternoon; and, when I received the first information of Major André's captivity, measures were instantly taken to apprehend him; but, before the officers, sent for the purpose, could reach Verplanck's Point, he had passed it with a flag, and got on board the Vulture ship of war, which lay a few miles below. He knew of my approach, and that I was visiting, with the Marquis, the north and middle redoubts, and from this circumstance was so straitened in point of time, that I believe he carried with him but very few if any material papers, though he has a very precise knowledge of the affairs of the post. The gentlemen of General Arnold's family,[1] I have the greatest rea-

[1] Colonel Franks and Colonel Varick were General Arnold's aids-de-camp. Colonel Varick asked that a court of inquiry be held on his conduct before as well as after he became an aid to Arnold. Washington replied on the 21st of October:

"I would willingly comply with your request for an inquiry, on the extensive ground you place it, did I think it could be done with propriety. But, in order for it to be a real and not a nominal inquiry, the Court would be obliged to go into an investigation of particular facts, which is impossible, as there are no allegations and no witnesses; so that they would only proceed upon such materials as you would furnish them. There seems to me to be too much generality in the inquiry, and that it is besides unnecessary, as your character is, so far as I am informed, unimpeached. In my opinion the proper line is to confine the inquiry to your conduct during your connexion with Arnold; and, as your former character will be a presumptive evidence of your present innocence, on

son to believe, were not privy in the least degree to the measures he was carrying on, or to his escape. I am, dear Sir, with very great esteem and regard, your, &c.[1]

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

ROBINSON'S HOUSE, IN THE HIGHLANDS,
26 September, 1780.

SIR,

I have the honor to inform Congress, that I arrived here yesterday, about twelve o'clock, on my return from Hartford. Some hours previous to my arrival, Major-General Arnold went from his quarters, which were at this place; and, as it was supposed over the river to the garrison at West Point; whither I proceeded myself, in order to visit the post. I found

the contrary the Court, I presume, will admit your testimonials respecting it, by the way, and in this light."

Accordingly the court, appointed by Heath, confined its inquiry to the period during which Arnold was in command at West Point. In the result it was established, that no just suspicions whatever could rest against the character of Colonel Varick. The court decided, that "his conduct was not only unimpeachable, but such as entitled him to a degree of merit, that did him great honor as an officer, and particularly distinguished him as a sincere friend to his country." A decision of the same import was made in regard to Colonel Franks.

[1] "On my arrival here a very disagreeable scene unfolded itself. By lucky accident, a conspiracy of the most dangerous nature, the object of which was to sacrifice this post, has been detected. General Arnold, who has sullied his former glory by the blackest treason, has escaped to the enemy. This is an event that occasions me equal regret and mortification; but traitors are the growth of every country, and in a revolution of the present nature, it is more to be wondered at, that the catalogue is so small, than that there have been found a few. The situation of the army at this time will make General Heath's presence with us useful. I have written to him for this purpose. I hope his removal will be attended with no inconvenience to your Excellency."—*Washington to Rochambeau*, 26 September, 1780.

General Arnold had not been there during the day, and on my return to his quarters he was still absent. In the mean time a packet had arrived from Lieutenant-Colonel Jameson, announcing the capture of a John Anderson, who was endeavoring to go to New York, with the several interesting and important papers, mentioned below, all in the handwriting of General Arnold.[1] This was also accompanied with a letter from the prisoner, avowing himself to be Major John André, adjutant-general of the British army, relating the manner of his capture, and endeavoring to show that he did not come under the description of a spy. From these several circumstances, and information that the General seemed to be thrown into some degree of agitation on receiving a letter, a little time before he went down from his quarters, I was led to conclude immediately, that he had heard of Major André's captivity, and that he would if possible escape to the enemy; and accordingly took such measures, as appeared the most probable, to apprehend him. But he had embarked in a barge, and proceeded down the river under a flag to the Vulture ship-of-war, which lay at some miles below Stony and Verplanck's Points. He wrote me after he got on board, a letter, of which the enclosed is a copy.

Major André is not arrived yet, but I hope he is secure, and that he will be here to-day. I have been and am taking precautions, which I trust will

[1] The papers contained in André's boots, copies of which were sent to Congress.

prove effectual, to prevent the important consequences, which this conduct on the part of General Arnold was intended to produce. I do not know the party, that took Major André, but it is said that it consisted only of a few militia, who acted in such a manner, upon the occasion as does them the highest honor, and proves them to be men of great virtue. They were offered, I am informed, a large sum of money for his release, and as many goods as they would demand, but without any effect. Their conduct gives them a just claim to the thanks of their country, and I also hope they will be otherwise rewarded. As soon as I know their names, I shall take pleasure in transmitting them to Congress. I have taken such measures, with respect to the Gentlemen of General Arnold's family, as prudence dictated; but, from every thing that has hitherto come to my knowledge, I have the greatest reason to believe they are perfectly innocent. I early secured Joshua Smith, the person mentioned in the close of General Arnold's letter, and find him to have had a considerable share in this business. I have the honor to be, &c. * * * [1]

[1] Read in Congress September 30th. Referred to Lovell, Van Dyke, and Duane.

"You will immediately make a distribution of the troops under your command to the several posts, that the whole may be in a state of defence at the shortest notice. You will also have each work supplied with ten days' provision, wood, water, and stores, and keep up constantly that supply; and you will take every other precaution for the security of the post. The enemy will have acquired from General Arnold a perfect knowledge of the defences, and will be able to take their measures with the utmost precision. This makes it essential, our vigilance and care should be redoubled for its preservation. You will do every thing in your power to gain information of the enemy's designs, and

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE.

ROBINSON'S HOUSE, 27 September, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I have concluded to send Major André of the British army, and Mr. Joshua H. Smith, who has had a great hand in carrying on the business between him and Arnold to Camp to-morrow. They will be under an escort of Horse, and I wish you to have *separate Houses* in *Camp* ready for their reception, in which they may be kept perfectly secure; and also strong, trusty guards trebly officered, that a part may be constantly in the room with them. They have not been permitted to be together, and must be still kept apart. I would wish the room for Mr. André to be a decent one, and that he may be treated with civility; but that he may be so guarded as to preclude a possibility of his escaping, which he will certainly attempt to effect, if it shall seem practicable in the most distant degree. Smith must also be as carefully secured, and not treated with asperity. I intend to return to-morrow morning, and hope to have the pleasure of seeing you in the course of the day. You may keep these several matters secret. I write to Mr. Tilghman. I am, dear Sir, &c.[1]

give me intelligence, as early as possible, of any movement against you. A party of militia, who have been employed cutting wood, and another as guards to the stores at Fishkill, that have been called in, are to return to their destinations. Colonel Gouvion will remain a few days at this post, to assist in the necessary arrangements."—*Washington to the Officer Commanding at West Point*, 27 September, 1780. Until the arrival of General St. Clair, General McDougall was placed in command.

[1] ". . . Your Excellency will have heard probably before this reaches you, of the perfidy of Major General Arnold. On the 25th of Septr. he went to the Enemy. He had entered very deeply into a combination with

TO MAJOR-GENERAL ST. CLAIR.

INSTRUCTIONS.

SIR,

You will repair forthwith to West Point, and take the command of that post with its dependencies till further orders. The troops under your command will consist of the Pensylvania Division, Col. Meigs's and Livingston's regiments of Continental troops, and a body of Massachusetts and New Hampshire Militia. The enclosed is a copy of the instructions left for the Commanding officer, which you will please to observe. Unless you should think it necessary, for the immediate security of the post, to draw the first Pensylvania brigade nearer West Point, I should wish it to remain somewhere in its present position, as it may then, at the same time, serve the purpose of reinforcing the main army, in case of a movement against it. But, on the first appearance of the enemy coming in force up the River, that brigade should have previous orders to march to your succor.

Orders have been given, in the case last mentioned, for the posts at Verplanck's and Stony Points to be evacuated, with all the cannon and stores, and the garrison added to that at West Point. But I would not wish this step to be precipitated; as, in case of an attempt to surprise you, these posts will not only be useful to give you the alarm, but they will probably, in all cases, gain you time, as the enemy would hardly venture to pass them with transports full of troops. The baggage and extra stores may be sent off at the first aspect of a serious movement; but the troops should not evacuate until the enemy are in a situation to invest the posts. Dobbs's Ferry may also serve you as an out-

them, as far as we can judge, for putting them in possession of the important post of West Point, where he commanded & the command of which he had solicited. For this purpose he had contrived an interview with Major André, Adjutant General to their Army, on the night of the 21st and delivered to him

"A copy of a State of Matters I had laid before a Council of Genl. Officers the 6 of Septr.

"An Estimate of the force at West Point & its Dependencies—of men to man the Works at West Point—Remarks on those works. A Return of Ordnance at West Point & its dependencies. Artillery Orders for the Disposition of the

post ; but care must be taken to distinguish the firing against a single vessel passing, from that against a number, which will of course be more continued. Great vigilance should be used in patrolling on the East side of the river, as it will otherwise be easy for the enemy to land a body of men below, and surprise Verplanck's. I must entreat your particular care of the boats on the river ; to keep them in repair, and as much as possible collected. All those at King's Ferry, more than are wanted for the necessary service of the communication, should be removed up the River. A part of the Militia at Verplanck's and Stony Points may also be drawn to the main garrison. Given at Headquarters, Tappan, October 1st, 1780.

Corps in case of an alarm at West Point. A Permit to Major André, under the Assumed name of John Anderson to pass our Guards. This officer, with all these papers in Arnold's hand writing, was taken by a most extraordinary & providential intervention of circumstances, under the Assumed Name of John Anderson & in a disguised habit, about Fifteen Miles from the Enemy's outpost at Kingsbridge, by a small Militia patrole who acted with great virtue upon the occasion, as he was returning to New York ; having been all the night of the 21st & next day in the vicinity of our posts at Stony & Verplanks points, and passed by them the night preceeding the capture. Arnold got information of the event on the morning of the 25 before it was known to any of the officers under his Command or others in Authority & pushed down the River in a barge to the Vulture sloop of war, which lay a few miles below Stony Point. Major André was tried by a Board of General Officers, and on his free & voluntary confession & Letters was sentenced to suffer death, agreeable to the practice & usage of Nations in like cases, which he has accordingly suffered. He acted with great candor after he avowed himself until he was executed. Your Excellency will probably see the whole of the proceedings in his case published. We have no doubt now, whatever may be the future objects & measures of the Enemy, that the primary & principal design of the embarkation they were making, was to take West Point, which through the preconcerted arrangements between them & Mr. Arnold, in all human probability, would have inevitably fallen into their hands most likely in the course of a few days after the discovery. The Enemy have not laid aside, from the accounts I continue to receive, their preparations for an expedition—and must now mean to make a push in some other more remote quarter. Hence your Excellency will perceive that they leave nothing unassayed to carry their point, but I trust there is more than abundant virtue, as well as means in our hands, if these are properly directed, to withstand & baffle easily all their most vigorous & artful efforts."—*Washington to Governor Jefferson*, 10 October, 1780.

TO JOHN MATHEWS, IN CONGRESS.

TAPPAN, 4 October, 1780.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have had the honor to receive your favors of the 15th and 24th ulto. I thank you much for your kind communications, which are rendered more pleasing as they are offered without reserve. As Congress has already allowed the alternative of raising men for twelve months, opinions on the propriety of the measure can be of no avail; but since you have done me the honor to ask mine, I have no scruple in declaring, I most firmly believe that the Independence of the United States never will be established, till there is an army on foot for the war; that, if we are to rely on occasional or annual levies, we must sink under the expense, and ruin must follow.

From an opinion, which seems to have influenced Congress, that men cannot be drafted for the war, (but which, with due deference to their judgment, I think is a mistaken one, as it seems to be a prevailing sentiment as I have heard, that nothing but an army on a permanent footing will do,) Gentn. unacquainted with the true state of facts, and struck with the magnitude of the bounty, which in the first instance must be given to induce men to engage for this period, without attending to the sum which is given for a year's service, perhaps in reality for a much less time, though a year may be mentioned as the ostensible term and that this sum is more than doubled at every new enlistment; without considering the immense waste of arms, ammunition, stores, camp utensils, in-

cidental to these changes; without adverting to the pay and subsistence of two sets of men at the same instant, (the old and new levies,) and the expense of marching and countermarching to and from camp; without taking into the acct. the interruption, which agriculture and all kinds of handicraft meet with, by which our supplies are lessened and the prices considerably increased; and, (wch. is of the greatest importance,) without considering the difference between a healthy army, (which is generally the case of one composed of old soldiers, and a sickly one, which is commonly the case with respect to the new, and the lives lost in acquiring a seasoning; and without considering that, in all exchanges of privates prisoners of war, we give the enemy a certain permanent force, and add but little and sometimes nothing to our own strength, as the terms of service of those we receive in exchange are already expired, or terminate often soon after;—without attending, I say, to these things, which are remote, and require close investigation and a recurrence to the public expenditures to be masters of them, they conclude, that the bounty necessary to engage men for the war is beyond our abilities, reject it, and adopt another system, which involves ultimately ten times the expense and infinitely greater distress. While, in the one case, we should have a well disciplined army, ready at all times and upon all occasions to take advantage of circumstances; in the other, the most favorable moments may pass away unimproved, because the composition of our Troops is such, that we dare not in ye begin-

ning of a campaign attempt enterprises, on acct. of the rawness of the men, nor at the latter end of it, because they are about to leave us, (after the immense toil and pains wch. the officers have taken to teach them their duty,) and we have another set to attend to.

From long experience and the fullest conviction, I have been and now am decidedly in favr. of a permanent force; but knowing the jealousies, wch. have been entertained on this head—Heaven knows how unjustly, and the cause of which could never be apprehended, were a due regard had to our local and other circumstances, even if ambitious views could be supposed to exist, and that our political helm was in another direction, I forbore to press my Sentiments for a time; but, at a moment when we are tottering on the brink of a precipice, silence would have been criminal. The amendment proposed by you for keeping the old levies in the field, till the new should arrive, would certainly be a most desirable thing, if it could be accomplished; but I doubt the practicability of it. For, if there is not a definite term fixed with the men, we could as easily get them for the war; and, if there was a period fixed, altho the condition of a relief should be annexed to it, (which more than probably would be kept as much as possible out of their sight,) we never should be able to retain them. Desertion therefore and a genl. loss of public arms would be the inevitable consequence of an attempt to detain them, after they had completed what they conceived to be the term of their engagement.

I felt much pain in reading that part of your letter, which speaks of the reception of the Comee. of Co-operation in Congress. At a time when public harmony was so essential, when we should aid and assist each other with all our abilities, when our hearts should be open to information and our hands ready to administer relief, to find distrusts and jealousies taking possession of the mind, and a party spirit prevailing, is a most melancholy reflection, and forbodes no good. I shall always be happy to hear from you, being with the truest esteem and regard, dear Sir, &c.[1]

TO JAMES DUANE, IN CONGRESS.

HD.-QRS., TAPPAN, 4 October, 1780.

I thank you, My Dear Sir, for your letter of the 19th of September; I should have been happy in the information you give me, that some progress had been made in the business of raising a permanent army, had it not been intimated to me, through other channels, that in the resolutions framed on this article, the fatal alternative of *for one year* has been admitted. In my letter to Congress, of the 20th of August, I recommended a draft for the war, or for three years, and said, "*A shorter period than one year is inadmissible.*" You will perceive, however, that the general

[1] The committee of coöperation, who had been several months with the army, and recently returned to Congress, had become unpopular with some of the members, in consequence of their strenuous endeavors to increase and render more permanent the military force. They were charged with being "too strongly tinctured with the *army principles*," which they had imbibed while absent in camp.

scope of my arguments looks to an army for the war, and any other idea crept in from an apprehension that this plan would not go down. The present juncture is, in my opinion, peculiarly favorable to a permanent army, and I regret that an opening is given for a temporary one. It also gives me pain to find, that the pernicious State system is still adhered to, by leaving the reduction and incorporation, &c., of the regiments to the particular States. This is one of the greatest evils of our affairs.

I share with you the pleasure you feel from the measures taking to strengthen the hands of Congress. I am convinced it is essential to our safety, that Congress should have an *efficient* power. The want of it must ruin us. The satisfaction I have in any successes that attend us, even in the alleviation of misfortunes, is always allayed by a fear that it will lull us into security. Supineness and a disposition to flatter ourselves seem to make parts of our national character. When we receive a check, and are not quite undone, we are apt to fancy we have gained a victory; and, when we do gain any little advantage, we imagine it decisive and expect the war is immediately to end. The history of the war is a history of false hopes and temporary expedients. Would to God they were to end here! This winter, if I am not mistaken, will open a still more embarrassing scene, than we have yet experienced, to the southward. I have little doubt, should we not gain a naval superiority, that Sir Henry Clinton will detach to the southward to extend his conquests. I am far from

being satisfied that we shall be prepared to repel his attempts.

Reflections of this kind to you, my dear Sir, are unnecessary. I am convinced you view our affairs on the same scale that I do, and will exert yourself to correct our errors and call forth our resources. The interview at Hartford produced nothing conclusive; because neither side knew with certainty what was to be expected. We could only combine possible plans on the supposition of possible events, and engage mutually to do every thing in our powers against the next campaign. Happy to rank you among the number of my friends, I speak to you with confidence. With the truest esteem and regard, I am, dear Sir, &c.[1]

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL JOHN CADWALADER.

HEAD-QRS., TAPPAN, 5 October, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I have to acknowledge and thank you for your obliging and friendly letter of the 20th ulto.—It came to this place in my absence from the army and during my necessary detention at West point on a very interesting but disgraceful incident in our military occurrences.

[1] In reply to this letter, after speaking of the plan proposed in Congress for a new arrangement of the army, Mr. Duane said: "I am persuaded that your Excellency's representations on this and every other subject will have as much influence as you can wish, and that, on this particular occasion, nothing but a clear conviction of impracticability will induce Congress to overrule your opinion. A false estimate of the power and perseverance of our enemies was friendly to the present revolution, and inspired that confidence of success in all ranks of people, which was necessary to unite them in so arduous a cause.

Altho I have but little leizure for the gratification of private correspondencies, I beg you to be assured, that, from a warmth of friendship, any letters of yours will be gratefully accepted; and it is with much pleasure I receive fresh assurances of your regard and attachment to me. We are now drawing an inactive campaign to a close; the beginning of which appeared pregnant with events of a favorable complexn. I hoped, but I hoped in vain, that a prospect was displaying, which wd. enable me to fix a period to my military pursuits, and restore me to domestic life. The favorable disposition of Spain, the promised succor from France, the combined force in the West Indies, the declaration of Russia (acceded to by other powers of Europe, and humiliating to the naval pride and power of Great Britain), the superiority of France and Spain by sea in Europe, the Irish claims and English disturbances, formed in the aggregate an opinion in my breast, (which is not very susceptible of peaceful dreams,) that the hour of deliverance was not far distant; for that, however unwilling Great B. might be to yield the point, it would not be in her power to continue the contest. But alas! these prospects, flattering as they were, have prov'd delusory, and I see nothing before us but accumulating distress.

You cannot forget the opinions, which were current on this floor during the first and second Congresses, and how firmly they established this error. We seem to part with it with reluctance. It still hangs heavily upon us, and has produced the indecision, the expedients, and the debility, of which you complain. I hope misfortunes and distresses will at length rouse us to just sentiments and vigorous exertions; and, with your Excellency, I pray God, that the fatal delusion, which has marked our conduct, may end here."—*MS. Letter*, October 10th.

We have been half of our time without provision, and are likely to continue so. We have no magazines, nor money to form them; and in a little time we shall have no men, if we had money to pay them. We have lived upon expedients till we can live no longer. In a word, the history of the war is a history of false hopes and temporary devices, instead of system and œconomy. It is in vain, however, to look back, nor is it our business to do so. Our case is not desperate, if virtue exists in the people, and there is wisdom among our rulers. But to suppose that this great revolution can be accomplished by a temporary army, that this army will be subsisted by State supplies, and that taxation alone is adequate to our wants, is in my opinion absurd, and as unreasonable as to expect an Inversion in the order of nature to accommodate itself to our views. If it was necessary, it could easily be proved to any person of a moderate share of understanding, that an annual army or an army raised on the spur of the occasion, besides being unqualified for the end designed, is, in various ways which could be enumerated, ten times more expensive than a permanent body of men, under good organization and military discipline, which never was nor never will be the case of new Troops. A thousand arguments, resulting from experience and the nature of things, might also be adduced to prove, that the army, if it is to depend upon State supplies, must disband or starve; and that taxation alone, (especially at this late hour,) cannot furnish the means to carry on the War. Is it not time then to retract from error, and benefit by experience? Or do we want

further proof of the ruinous system we have pertinaciously adhered to ?

You seem to regret not having accepted the appointment of Congress to a command in the American army. It is a circumstance, that ever was most sincerely regretted by me ; and it is the more to be lamented, as we find an officer high in rank and military reputation capable of turning apostate and attempting to sell his Country. Men of independent spirit and firmness of mind must step forth to rescue our affairs from the embarrassments they have fallen into, or they will suffer in the general wreck. I do not mean to apply this more to the military than civil line. We want the best and ablest men in both.

To tell you, if any event shd. ever bring you to the army, and you have no comd. in it equal to your merit, nor *place* more agreeable to your wishes than being a member of my family, that I should be happy in seeing you there, would only be announcing a truth, which has often been repeated, and wch. I hope you are convinced. My best respects attend Mrs. Cadwalader, and compliments of congratulation to both of you on the increase of your family. With sentiments of the most sincere regard and affection, I am, dear Sir, &c.[1]

[1] General Cadwalader had written : "I have now reason to wish I had accepted the command given me by Congress ; but at that time I conceived that the war was near a conclusion. Many others were of the same opinion, and we flattered ourselves with expectations of a speedy peace. In this, however, I remember you widely differed in opinion. Whatever may be the event, be assured there is no person in America more firmly attached to you as commander, and to the general cause ; and, should our affairs take an unfortunate turn, I shall to the last share with you the misfortunes of the times."—September 20th.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 6 October, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

There is no disposition that can be made of the army *at this time*, under our prest. uncertainties, that may not be subjected to material change, (as you will be convinced by recurring to the conversation, which I held with you on Wednesday last.) It is, as I observed to you on that occasion, a matter of great question with me, whether West Point will not become the head-quarters of the army, when we go into cantonments for the winter. I am very apprehensive, that the diminution of our present force and the little prospect of recruiting the army in season, the importance of West Point and economical motives, will compel us to concentre our force on the North River, keeping light parties only on our flanks. If, under this information, you should incline to take the immediate command of the Detachment, which is about to march for West Point, and the general direction of matters on the East side of Hudson's River, it will be quite agreeable to me, that you should do so. But candor has led me to a declaration of the uncertainty of that Post's being long removed from my immediate Command.

P. S. Your immediate determination is therefore necessary, that the orders may be prepared accordingly. The army will march and seperate to-morrow. I am, &c.[1]

[1] "A new disposition of the army going to be made," General Greene had written, "and an officer appointed to the command of West Point and the district on the east side of the North River, I take the liberty just to intimate my

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE.

INSTRUCTIONS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, TAPPAN,
6 October, 1780.

You will take the command of the two divisions, consisting of the Jersey and York brigades, and Stark's and late Poor's brigades, with which you will march by the directest route to West Point. The troops will go all the way by land, sending their baggage and Artillery by water from King's Ferry, for the security of which you will take effectual precautions. I wish the troops to arrive at their destination, as soon as it can be done without fatiguing them. The first Pensylvania brigade marches to-morrow to join the army ; and General St. Clair is directed to move the 2d. Pensylvania brigade and Meig's regiment to the army, as soon as a sufficient corps arrives to replace them. I wish them to be enabled to begin their march, as soon as it can be conveniently done. St. Clair waits till he is relieved by a major-general.

You will observe the instructions already given to the Commanding officers of the post, of which the enclosed are copies, with the following additions. So soon as you arrive with the troops, you will discharge all the New Hampshire and Massachusetts militia, with my thanks for their services. You will send off all of the spare wagon and riding-horses, and use every other expedient in your power to economize your forage, which you know

inclination for the appointment. Your Excellency will judge of the propriety, and determine as the honor of the army and the good of the service may require. I hope there is nothing indelicate or improper in the application. I am prompted to the measure from the feelings incident to the human heart, as well as encouraged with the hope that it will meet with your approbation, from the flattering manner in which you have been pleased to speak of my conduct upon different occasions.

"I shall make use of no arguments, being persuaded my pretensions and inclinations will have their full operation, and that nothing short of the public good and military propriety will contravene my wishes. My first object is the freedom and happiness of my country. With these your Excellency's reputation and glory are inseparably connected ; and, as it has been my constant wish, so it shall be my future endeavor, to promote the establishment of both." —October 5th.

is an article of the greatest importance. You will exert yourself to complete the works, and put them in the most perfect state of defence. This is essential, under the knowledge the enemy have of their present state, as a change in their situation will not only render them in reality more defensive, but will diminish the usefulness of the information Arnold has it in his power to give. The approaching reduction of the army adds to the necessity of having this important post in the most respectable state of defence. Lt. Col. Gouvion has my orders to join you for this purpose with his corps. You will keep such parties, as you may judge safe and expedient, advanced towards the enemy on the East side of the River, for the purpose of restraining their depredations and protecting the Country.

You will begin to form winter covering at West Point and its dependencies for a garrison of about the number of your present command; and you will prosecute measures for ample magazines of wood. Besides the four brigades already mentioned, the Artillery, and the corps of sappers and miners, you will have under your command Livingston's regiment and Sheldon's dragoons. There are also two Connecticut State regiments stationed on the Sound, which, on an emergency, you may call to your aid; and with whom, in the mean time, you can communicate for intelligence of what passes in the Sound. You will inform General McDougall that his division, Stark's and late Poor's brigades, are with you. His private affairs may demand his attention a while; after which he will probably join you. When you have made your disposition, you will report it to me. I commit this important post to your care, in full confidence in your prudence, vigilance, activity, and good conduct.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

SIR, PARAMUS, 7 October, 1780.

* * * * * *

I have the honor to enclose to Congress a copy of the Proceedings of a Board of General Officers (No. 1) in the case of Major André, adjutant-general to

the British army. This Officer was executed in pursuance of the opinion of the Board, on Monday the 2d instant, at twelve o'clock at our late Camp at Tappan. He acted with great candor, from the time he avowed himself after his capture, until he was executed. Congress will perceive by a Copy of a letter I received from him on the 1st instant, that it was his desire to be shot; but the practice and usage of war, circumstanced as he was, were against the indulgence.[1] At the bottom of the sixth page of the proceedings an explanatory note is added, to prevent any suspicions being entertained injurious to Colonel Sheldon, who, otherwise, from the letter addressed to him, might be supposed to have been privy to the measures between General Arnold and Major André. If it should be the pleasure of Congress to publish the case, which I would take the liberty to suggest may not be improper, it will be necessary for the explanatory note to be annexed.

Besides these proceedings, I transmit in the Inclosure No. 2 copies of sundry letters respecting the matter, which are all that passed on the subject, not included in the proceedings. I would not suffer Mr. Elliot and Mr. Smith to land, who came up to Dobbs's Ferry agreeable to Sir Henry Clinton's letter of the 30th of September. Genl. Robertson was permitted to come on shore, was met by Major-General Greene,

[1] "Your Excellency will have heard of the execution of the British adjutant-general. The circumstances he was taken in justified it, and policy required a sacrifice; but as he was more unfortunate than criminal in the affair, and, as there was much in his character to interest, while we yielded to the necessity of rigor, we could not but lament it."—*Washington to Rochambeau*, 10 October, 1780.

and mentioned substantially what is contained in his letter of the 2d instant. It might not perhaps be improper to publish the letters, or a part of them, in this Inclosure as an Appendix to the proceedings of the Board of General Officers. * * *

I have now the pleasure to communicate the names of the three persons, who captured Major André, and who refused to release him, notwithstanding the most earnest importunities and assurances of a liberal reward on his part. Their conduct merits our warmest esteem; and I beg leave to add, that I think the public will do well to make them a handsome gratuity. They have prevented in all probability our suffering one of the severest strokes, that could have been meditated against us. Their names are John Paulding, David Williams, and Isaac Van Wart.[1]

For the present I have detached the Jersey, New York, and New Hampshire brigades, with Stark's, to the Highland posts. They marched this morning from Orangetown, and will relieve the Pennsylvania line, which was thrown in at the moment General Arnold went to the enemy. Major-General Greene has marched with these four Brigades, and will command at West Point and its dependencies, till a

[1] Congress rewarded Paulding, Williams, and Van Wart by voting an annual pension of two hundred dollars to each for life; and also ordering that the Board of War should procure for each a silver medal, on one side of which should be a shield with the inscription *Fidelity*, and on the other the motto, *Vincit Amor Patriæ*. To a letter from the President of Congress, accompanying the resolutions for these objects, General Washington replied: "The recompense is ample; it is an evidence of the generosity of Congress, a flattering tribute to the virtue of those citizens, and must prove a powerful incitement to others to imitate their example." The medals were afterwards given to the three individuals by Washington himself at head-quarters.—*Sparks*.

further disposition. The main body of the army, the forage about Orange town and the lower Country being exhausted, also moved this morning, and is now arrived here. We have had a cold, wet, and tedious march, on account of the feeble state of our Cattle, and have not a drop of rum to give the troops. My intention is to proceed with them to the country in the neighborhood of Passaic Falls. I have the honor to be, &c. * * *[1]

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GATES.

HEAD-QUARTERS, NEAR PASSAIC FALLS,
8 October, 1780.

SIR:

I have received your several favors of the 30th of August, 3d and 15th of Septemr. The first reached me only two days before I set out for Hartford, to meet Count de Rochambeau and the Chevalier de Ternay. The two last came to hand while I was absent. The first account, which I received of the unfortunate affair near Camden, was by a Copy of your letter of the 20th Augt. from Hillsborough to the President of Congress. The shock was the greater, as the operations, a few days preceding the Action, were much in our favor. The behavior of the Continental troops does them infinite honor. The accounts, which the enemy give of the action, show that their victory was dearly bought. Under present circumstances, the System, which you are pursuing, seems extremely proper. It would answer

[1] Read in Congress October 12th. Referred to Sullivan, Bland, and Mathews.

no good purpose to take a position near the Enemy, while you are so far inferior in force. If they can be kept in check by the light, irregular troops under Colo. Sumpter and other active officers, they will gain nothing by the time, which must be necessarily spent by you in collecting and arranging the new Army, forming Magazines, and replacing the Stores, which were lost in the Action.

Further detachments from this Army will very much depend upon the measures, which the enemy mean ultimately to pursue. While they maintain a superiority by sea, they have an infinite advantage over us; as they can send off a detachment from their Army, make a stroke, and return again, while a part of ours may be marching to meet them at the point of destination. Indeed, our reduction of numbers will be so great, by the expiration of the times of the levies, the last of December, that the enemy may then make very considerable detachments, and yet leave a force sufficient to make us apprehensive for the safety of the Highland posts, and for the security of the communication thro' Jersey, on which we in a great measure depend for supplies.

It was owing to the fatal policy of temporary enlistments, that the enemy were enabled to gain the footing, which they hold in the Southern States; and it is much to be feared, that the same cause will be attended with an increase of disagreeable effects. They are well acquainted with the period of our dissolution, and have scarcely ever failed of taking advantage of them; and we can hardly suppose, they will be more negligent this winter, than the preceding ones.

Preparations have been some time making for an embarkation from New York. The destination is publicly said to be to the southward, and I think probability is in favor of that report. Should a further extension of their Conquests in that quarter be their object, I am in hopes, that the force, collecting by the exertions of North Carolina, Virginia, and Maryland, will keep them confined to the limits of South Carolina, at least till a better general disposition of our Affairs can be made, or untill we may receive more effectual assistance from our Allies; a measure which they have most seriously in view, and of which an unlucky coincidence of circumstances has hitherto deprived us.

The French Fleet has been blocked up in the harbor of Newport almost ever since its arrival there, by a superior British squadron; which superiority has been lately increased by the arrival of Admiral Rodney from the West Indies with ten ships. Count de Guichen touched nowhere upon this Coast, tho', by a variety of accounts, he was up as high as the latitude of 26, and by some higher. The report of his having taken 100 sail of British merchantmen is, I imagine, premature; as we have intelligence of a late date from the Havana, and no such circumstance is mentioned. It will be of very great importance, that I should be regularly informed of every movement of the Enemy, as I shall thereby be better enabled to form an opinion upon any appearances in this quarter. I am, Sir, &c.[1]

[1] The French admiral, M. de Ternay, continued to entertain the same unfavorable sentiments, respecting the prospect of affairs in America, which he

TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY AT THE COURT OF FRANCE.

BERGEN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY,
11 October, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I was very much obliged by the letter, which you did me the honor to write me by our amiable young friend, the Marquis de Lafayette, whose exertions to serve this country in his own are additional proofs of

conceived on his first arrival in the country. In writing to Count de Vergennes he said: "In my letter of the 10th of September" (see above, p. 436), "you will have seen what were my views relative to the actual position of the squadron and the army. I am still of the same opinion, and have charged M. de la Pérouse to explain to you my reasons. I persist in the belief, that the revolution is not so far advanced, as is generally imagined in Europe. The conspiracy lately formed by an American general to deliver into the hands of the English the post, which was confided to him, is an evidence that there are traitors. A single individual of this description might decide the fortunes of a campaign, and the fate of the country. When the word *liberty* was pronounced in North America, all the world took up arms, but the leaders of the revolution have never calculated the consequences. If France does not decide the question, all is lost. What an occasion have we missed during the present year! Shall we be more fortunate the next? A general, who is absolute master of his operations, can alone succeed. If there is an inferiority, the sea and land forces should act separately. An unforeseen reunion of the enemy ought to be the basis of every project."—*MS. Letter*, October 18th.

In reply to this letter, Count de Vergennes said: "You are on the spot, and have a better opportunity of judging of the prevalent dispositions in America, than we can have here; but I feel no difficulty in subscribing to your opinion respecting the progress of the revolution, and I am not less afflicted than yourself, that a republic, which is yet hardly in its cradle, should witness a crime so atrocious as that of Arnold. It is too enormous to excite a fear, that it will find many imitators. The example, therefore, is less to be apprehended, than the motives which gave rise to his treason. These may find action in a country, where jealousy is in some sort the essence of the government. I have always thought, and have not yet changed my opinion, that the great efforts on our part by land would have the double inconvenience of creating much internal disquietude, without obtaining a decisive external advantage, and that the most effective succours ought to consist in forces by sea. I am alone in this opinion, but I shall retain it till I can be convinced of its unsoundness or error."—*MS. Letter*, December 2d.

his zealous attachment to our cause, and have endeared him to us still more. He came out flushed with expectations of a decisive campaign, and fired with hopes of acquiring fresh laurels; but in both he has been disappointed; for we have been condemned to an inactivity as inconsistent with the situation of our affairs, as with the ardor of his temper.

I am sensible of all I owe you, my dear Sir, for your sentiments of me; and, while I am happy in your esteem, I cannot but wish for occasions of giving you marks of mine. The idea of making a tour together, which you suggest, after the war, would be one of the strongest motives I could have to postpone my plan of retirement, and make a visit to Europe, if my domestic habits, which seem to acquire strength from restraint, did not tell me I shall find it impossible to resist them longer than my duty to the public calls for the sacrifice of my inclinations.

I doubt not you are so fully informed by Congress of our political and military state, that it would be superfluous to trouble you with any thing relating to either. If I were to speak on topics of this kind, it would be to show that our present situation makes one of two things essential to us, a peace, or the most vigorous aid of our allies, particularly in the article of money. Of their disposition to serve us we cannot doubt; their generosity will do every thing their means will permit. With my best wishes for the preservation of your useful life, and for every happiness that can attend you, which a sincere attachment can dictate, I am, &c.

TO COLONEL JAMES WOOD.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 11 October, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I have received your favors of the 25th Augt. and 21st of September.

I am pleased to find by the last that your supplies had been more regular for some time, and that you had prospects of keeping them up.[1] I never entertained the least doubt of your care and attention to the business committed to your charge, or supposed that the distresses of the troops of Convention, on the score of provision, were in any degree owing to your want of proper exertions. Had such a thought ever existed, I should have altered my opinion, on receiving letters upon the subject from His Excellency Governor Jefferson, and from Brig.-Genl. Hamilton, who both speak of your conduct in the most favorable manner, and attribute the good order and temper, which prevailed among the troops during the time of their distress, to your prudent and conciliating management. This entitles you to my warmest thanks.

Your command, from the nature of it, cannot be the most agreeable at any rate, much less so when attended by a variety of perplexities; and you may therefore have a wish of being relieved this Winter. Should this be your inclination, I could not with propriety in common cases object to it, as no officer ought to have more than his share of any duty imposed upon him; but when it is considered how essential

[1] Colonel Wood commanded at Charlotteville, and had the charge of the convention troops at that place.

your services are in your present station, how difficult it is to find persons capable of conducting matters properly in the deranged state of all our departments, and how much better you are qualified, from an acquaintance with the business, than a stranger; to say nothing of the agreeable light in which you stand with the officers of Convention, which will add not a little to the relief of any difficulties which may occur; you must excuse me for requesting your continuance at least a while longer. An exchange of the troops may possibly take place, or the mode of supplies may be put upon such a footing as to render your presence of less importance.

We have never made the least difficulty of exchanging the officers of the troops of Convention; on the contrary, we have ever endeavored to accomplish it. If, therefore, Brig.-Genl. Specht can make interest with Sir Henry Clinton, I shall without hesitation agree to his exchange for an officer of equal Rank. Be pleased to inform Genl. Hamilton, that I forwarded the letter enclosed in his of the 24th of Augt., as I shall do that enclosed in your last. I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QRS., PASSAIC FALLS,
11 October, 1780.

SIR,

Three days since I received your Excellency's letter of the 4th, with the enclosed resolutions, which, as the army was in motion to this post, I had it not in

my power to answer before.[1] I am much obliged to Congress for the honor they do me by the fresh mark of their attention and confidence, conferred upon me in the reference they have been pleased to make. My wish to concur in sentiment with them, and a conviction that there is no time to be lost in carrying the measures relative to the army into execution, make me reluctantly offer any objections to the plan, that has been adopted; but a sense of what I owe to Congress, and a regard to consistency, will not permit me to suppress the difference of opinion, which happens to exist upon the present occasion, on points that appear to me far from unessential. In expressing it, I can only repeat the ideas, which I have more than once taken the liberty to urge.

That there are the most conclusive reasons for reducing the number of regiments, no person acquainted with the situation of our affairs and the state of the army will deny. A want of officers, independant of other considerations, were sufficient to compel us to it. But that the temper of the army, produced by its sufferings, requires great caution, in any reforms that are attempted, is a position not less evident than the former. In services the best established, where the hands of government are strengthened by the strongest interests of the army to submission, the reducing of its regiments and dismissing a great part of its officers is always a measure of delicacy and difficulty. In ours, where the officers are held by the feeblest

[1] See the above resolutions in the *Journals of Congress*, October 3d. They contain the plan of a new arrangement of the army. By a separate resolve they were referred to the Commander-in-chief for his opinion.

ties, and are mouldering away by dayly resignations, it is peculiarly so. The last reduction occasioned many to quit the Service, besides those who were reformed, and left durable seeds of discontent among those who remained. The general topic of declamation was, that it was as hard as dishonorable for men, who had made every sacrafice to the Service, to be turned out of it at the pleasure of those in power, without an adequate compensation. In the maturity to which their uneasinesses have now risen, from a continuance in misery, they will be still more impatient under an attempt of a similar nature. How far these dispositions may be reasonable, I pretend not to decide, but in the extremity to which we are arrived, policy forbids us to add new irritations. Too many of the officers wish to get rid of their Commissions; but they are unwilling to be forced into it.

It is not the intention of these remarks to discourage a reform; but to show the necessity of guarding against the ill effects by an ample provision, both for the officers who stay, and for those who are reduced. This should be the basis of the plan, and without it I apprehend the most mischievous consequences. This would obviate many scruples, that will otherwise be found prejudicial in the extreme. I am convinced Congress are not a little straitened in the means of a present provision, so ample as to give satisfaction; but this proves the expediency of a future one, and brings me to that, which I have so frequently recommended as the most economical, the most politic, and the most effectual, that could be devised, a half-pay

for life. Supported by a prospect of a permanent independence, the officers would be tied to the Service, and would submit to many momentary privations, and to the inconveniences, which the situation of public affairs makes unavoidable. This is exemplified in the Pensylvania officers, who, being upon this establishment, are so much interested in the Service, that, in the course of five months there has been only one resignation in that line.

If the objection, drawn from the principle of this measure being incompatible with the genius of our government, is thought insurmountable, I would propose a substitute less eligible in my opinion, but which may answer the purpose; it is to make the present half-pay for seven years, whole pay for the same period, to be advanced in two different payments, one half in a year after the conclusion of peace, the other half in two years subsequent to the first. It will be well to have it clearly understood, that the reduced officers are to have the depreciation of their pay made good, lest any doubt should arise on this head.

No objection occurs to me to this measure, except it be thought too great an expense; but, in my judgment, whatever can give consistency to our military establishment will be ultimately favorable to economy. It is not easy to be conceived, except by those who are witnesses to it, what an additional waste and consumption of every thing, and consequently what an increase of expense, results from laxness of discipline in the army; and where the officers think they are doing the public a favor by holding their Commis-

sions, and the men are continually fluctuating, it is impossible to maintain discipline. Nothing can be to me more obvious, than that a sound military establishment and the interests of economy are the same. How much more the purposes of the war will be promoted by it, in other respects, will not admit of an argument.

In reasoning upon the measure of a future provision, I have heard Gentlemen object the want of it in some foreign armies, without adverting to the difference of circumstances. The Military profession holds the first rank in most of the Countries of Europe, and is the road to honor and emolument. The establishment is permanent, and whatever be an officer's provision, it is for life, and he has a profession for life. He has future as well as present motives of military honor and preferment. He is attached to the Service by the spirit of the Government, by education, and in most cases by early habit. His present condition, if not splendid, is comfortable. Pensions, distinctions, and particular privileges, are commonly his rewards in retirement. In the case of the American officers, the military character has been suddenly taken up, and is to end with the war.

The number of Regiments fixed upon by Congress is that, which I should have wished, but I think the aggregate number of men too small. Should the Regiments be completed, making the usual deductions for casualties, and not counting upon the three Regiments of South Carolina and Georgia, we should not have in the Infantry above 18,000 fighting men

rank and file; from whom, when we have taken the garrison of West Point, and the different garrisons for the frontiers, there would remain a force not equal even to a vigorous defensive, entirely unequal to a decisive coöperation with our allies, should their efforts next campaign be directed this way, as we have reason to hope. I confess, too, that I do not expect the States will complete their regiments, at whatever point they may be placed. If they are any thing near being full, they will be apt to think the difference not material, without considering that what may be small in their quota, will be very considerable in the aggregate of deficiencies in a force originally calculated too low for our exigencies.

The enemy's whole embodied force of Infantry in these States (without speaking of the occasional aids of militia), on a moderate estimate, must amount to between eighteen and twenty thousand fighting men. We ought on no scale of reasoning to have less than an equal number in the field (exclusive of all garrisons,) for a vigorous defensive. Let us then state our armies in the field at eighteen thousand. West Point for complete security requires two thousand five hundred. Fort Schuyler, Fort Pitt, and other frontier posts require fifteen hundred. By this calculation twenty-two thousand fighting men appear to be necessary on a defensive plan. To have which, our total number must be thirty thousand rank and file. The wagoners, workmen at factories, waiters, men for other extra services, sick, &c., on an average make at least a fourth of the total numbers; which Congress may see by

recurring to the returns of the army from time to time.

Much less should we hesitate to exert ourselves to have this number, if we have any thoughts of recovering what we have lost. As to the abilities of the Country to maintain them, I am of opinion, they will be found adequate, and that they will be less strained than they have heretofore been, from the necessity we have been so frequently under of recurring to the aid of militia.

It is my duty also to inform Congress, that in the late conference with the French general and admiral, though I could not give assurances, I was obliged to give an opinion of the force we might have the next campaign, and I stated the army in this quarter at fifteen thousand operative Continental troops; which will greatly exceed that which we should have by the proposed arrangement, for it would not give us above eleven. On this idea of fifteen thousand, a memorial with a plan for next campaign has been transmitted to the court of France.

I would therefore beg leave to propose that each Regiment of Infantry should consist of one colonel, where the present colonels are continued, or one lieut.-colonel commandant, two majors, a first and second, nine captains, twenty-two subalterns, one surgeon, one mate, one sergeant-major, one qrmr.-sergeant, forty-five sergeants, one drum-major, one fife-major, ten drums, ten fifers, six hundred and twelve rank and file. Fifty regiments at six hundred and twelve rank and file each will amount to thirty thou-

sand six hundred rank and file, the force I have stated to be requisite.

The number of officers to a regiment by our present establishment has been found insufficient. It is not only inconvenient and productive of irregularities in our formation and manœuvres, but the number taken for the different offices of the staff leaves the regiments destitute of field-officers, and the companies so unprovided, that they are obliged to be entrusted to the care of sergeants and corporals, which soon ruins them. To obviate this, I ask three field-officers to a regiment, besides a captain and two subalterns to do the duties of each company, three supernumerary subalterns as paymaster, adjutant, and quartermaster, and one to reside in the State as a recruiting officer. Officers continually employed in this way, to improve every opportunity that offered, would engage men while those who were occasionally detached for a short space of time would do nothing. I ask one drum and fife extraordinary to attend this officer. The supernumeraries to rank and rise in the regiment with the other officers. Three field-officers will be thought necessary, when we consider the great proportion employed as adjutant-general, inspectors, brigade-majors, wagon-masters, superintendents of hospitals; in addition to whom I would also propose a field-officer to reside in each State, where the number of its regiments exceed two, and a captain where it does not, to direct the recruiting service, and transact business for the line to which he belongs with the State, which I think would be a very useful institution.

Instead of regiments of cavalry, I would recommend legionary corps, which should consist of four troops of mounted dragoons of sixty each, making 240; and two corps of dismounted dragoons of sixty each, making one hundred and twenty; with the same number of comd. and non-comd. officers as at present. To make the regiments larger will be attended with an excessive expense, to purchase horses in the first instance and to subsist them afterwards; and I think the augmentation, though it would be useful, not essential. I prefer legionary corps, because the kind of service we have for horse almost constantly requires the aid of infantry. In quarters, as they are commonly obliged to be remote from the army for the benefit of forage, it is indispensable for their security; and to attach to them infantry drawn from the regiments has many inconveniences.

Besides the four Regiments I cannot forbear recommending, that two partisan Corps may be kept up, commanded by Colo. Armand and Major Lee. Tho' in general I dislike independant corps, I think a partisan corps with an army useful in many respects, Its name and destination stimulate to enterprise; and the two officers I have mentioned have the best claims to public attention. Colonel Armand is an officer of great merit, which, added to his being a foreigner, to his rank in life, and to the sacrafices of property he has made, renders it a point of delicacy as well as justice to continue to him the means of serving honorably. Major Lee has rendered such distinguished services, and possesses so many Talents

for commanding a corps of this nature, he deserves so much credit for the perfection in which he has kept his corps, as well as for the handsome exploits he has performed, that it would be a loss to the service, and a discouragement to merit, to reduce him and I do not see how he can be introduced into one of the Regiments in a manner satisfactory to himself, and which will enable him to be equally useful, without giving too much disgust to the whole line of cavalry.

The Partisan Corps may consist of three Troops of Mounted Dragoons and three of dismounted dragoons, of fifty each, making in all three hundred. I would only propose one alteration in the proposed arrangement of artillery, which is to have ten companies instead of nine. The numerous demands of the service have made the establishment of companies hitherto not too great; and it would be injurious to diminish them materially. Nine companies would be an irregular formation for a battalion of artillery, and eight would be much too few. This makes me wish they may be fixed at ten. The formation of nine Companies in the Infantry is with a view to one light company to act separately.

I sincerely wish Congress had been pleased to make no alternative in the term of Service, but had confined it to the War, by inlistment, draft, or assessment, as might be found necessary. On the footing on which their requisition now stands, we shall be certain of getting very few men for the war, and must continue to feel all the evils of temporary en-

gagements. In the present humor of the States, I should entertain the most flattering hopes, that they would enter upon vigorous measures to raise an army for the War, if Congress appeared decided upon the point; but, if they hold up a different idea as admissible, it will be again concluded, that they do not consider an army for the war as essential, and this will encourage the opposition of men of narrow, interested, and feeble tempers, and enable them to defeat the primary object of the resolution. Indeed, if the mode by inlistment is the only one made use of to procure the men, it must necessarily fail. In my letter of the 20th of August I say, "any period short of a year is inadmissible"; but all my observations tend to prove the pernicious operation of engaging men for any term short of the war, and the alternative is only on the supposition, that the other should on experiment be found impracticable. But I regard it as of the highest importance, that the experiment should first be fairly tried. The alternative, if absolutely necessary, can be substituted hereafter. The encouragement to the officer, and the bounty to the recruit, are both too small in the present state of things, unless the latter could be in specie, which it is probable would have a powerful influence. In case of recruits made in camp, no bounty is specified; it will be necessary here as well as in the country, with this additional reason, that a recruit obtained in the army will be more valuable than one obtained in the country.

I must confess, also, it would have given me infinite pleasure, that Congress had thought proper to take

the reduction and incorporation of the Regiments under their own direction. The mode of leaving it to the States is contrary to my sentiments, because it is an adherence to the State system, and because I fear it will be productive of great confusion and discontent; and it is requisite the business in contemplation should be conducted with the greatest circumspection. I fear, also, the *professing* to *select* the officers retained in Service will give disgust, both to those who go and to those who remain; the former will be sent away under the public stigma of inferior merit, and the latter will feel no pleasure in a present preference, when they reflect that at some future period they may experience a similar fate. I barely mention this, as I am persuaded Congress did not advert to the operation of the expressions made use of, and will readily alter them.

I beg leave to remark, before I conclude, that, if Congress should be pleased to reconsider their resolutions, it will be of the greatest moment that the number of men, and the term for which they are to be raised, should be first determined, and the requisition transmitted to the several States. In this article time presses; the others may be examined more at leizure, though it is very necessary the whole should be put into execution as speedily as possible.

To accelerate the business I have directed, agreeable to the tenor of the resolution, returns to be immediately made, which shall be without delay transmitted to the States, to show them at one view the force they have, and the deficiencies for which they will have to provide the moment they know the

quotas respectively required of them. With the highest respect and esteem I have the honor to be, &c. * * * [1]

TO LIEUTENANT-COLONEL JOHN LAURENS.[2]

HD.-QRS., PASSAIC FALLS,
13 October, 1780.

MY DEAR LAURENS,

Your friendly and affection'e letter of the 4th came to my hands on the 10th and would have been acknowledged yesterday by the Baron de Steuben but for some important business I was preparing for Congress.

In no instance since the commencement of the war, has the interposition of Providence appeared more remarkably conspicuous than in the rescue of the post and garrison of West point from Arnold's villanous perfidy. How far he meant to involve me in the catastrophe of this place, does not appear by any indubitable evidence; and I am rather inclined to think he did not wish to hazard the more important object of his treachery, by attempting to combine two events, the lesser of which might have marr'd the greater. A

[1] Read in Congress October 16th. Referred to the Committee on his letter of 20 August last, together with the plan of a new arrangement.

Congress adopted the amendments proposed by the Commander-in-chief. Baron Steuben, who was then in Philadelphia, on his way to the southward, wrote as follows:

"It is with the greatest satisfaction I acquaint you, that the plan of arrangement for the army, which your Excellency sent to Congress, has been agreed to without any alteration. The granting half-pay for life to the reduced officers has met with some opposition; yet the proposition has not only passed, but it was resolved immediately after to extend these advantages to all the officers in the service."—*MS. Letter*, October 23d. See also *Journals of Congress*, October 21st.

[2] Colonel Laurens had been taken prisoner at the capitulation of Charleston, and was now on parole at Philadelphia. He had written to General Washington, congratulating him on the providential detection of Arnold's treason.

combination of extraordinary circumstances, and unaccountable deprivation of presence of mind in a man of the first abilities, and the virtue of three militia men, threw the adjutant-general of the British forces, (with full proofs of Arnold's treachery,) into our hands. But for the egregious folly, or the bewildered conception, of Lieut.-Colonel Jameson, who seemed lost in astonishment, and not to have known what he was doing, I should undoubtedly have got Arnold. André has met his fate, and with that fortitude, which was to be expected from an accomplished man and gallant officer; but I am mistaken if, at *this* time, "Arnold is undergoing the torment of a mental Hell."[1] He wants feeling. From some traits of his character, which have lately come to my knowledge, he seems to have been so hackneyed in villany, and so lost to all sense of honor and shame, that, while his faculties will enable him to continue his sordid pursuits, there will be no time for remorse. * * *

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE.

HEAD-QUARTERS, PASSAIC FALLS,
14 October, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

By a letter received yesterday afternoon from His Excellency, the President of Congress, of the 6th inst, enclosing the Copy of a Resolution of the preceding day, I find it has been their pleasure to direct me to order a Court of Inquiry to be held on the con-

[1] Alluding to a passage in Colonel Laurens' letter, in which he said: "André has, I suppose, paid the forfeit which public justice demanded. Example will derive new force from his conspicuous character. Arnold must undergo a punishment comparatively more severe in the permanent, increasing torment of a mental hell."—October 4th.

duct of Major-General Gates, as Commander of the Southern army; and also to direct me to appoint an Officer to command it in his room, until the inquiry is made. As Congress have been pleased to leave the Officer to command on this occasion, to my choice, it is my wish to appoint you; and, from the pressing situation of affairs in that quarter, of which you are not unapprized, that you should arrive there as soon as circumstances will possibly admit. Besides my own inclination to this choice, I have the satisfaction to inform you, that, from a letter I have received, it concurs with the wishes of the Delegates of the three Southern States most immediately interested in the present operations of the Enemy; and I have no doubt, that it will be perfectly agreeable to the sentiments of the whole.[1] Your ulterior Instructions will be prepared when you arrive here.

[1] Mr. Mathews, a delegate in Congress from South Carolina, wrote as follows to General Washington: "I am authorized by the delegates of the three southern States to communicate to your Excellency their wish, that Major-General Greene may be the officer appointed to the command of the southern department, if it would not be incompatible with the rules of the army."—October 6th.

"Our southern affairs wear a most disagreeable aspect, and prove more and more the necessity of renouncing that feeble system, which has brought this country to so perplexing a crisis. If there were any hope of our counsels assuming that complexion, which the exigency demands, the progress of the enemy at this period would seem to be an advantage rather than an evil; for they have not a stamina of force sufficient for such extensive conquests, and by spreading themselves out, as they are now doing, they will render themselves vulnerable every where. But I see no chance of the change which we stand in need of, and therefore I fear they will realize their anticipations. You have your wish in the officer appointed to the southern command. I think I am giving you a general, but what can a general do, without men, without arms, without clothing, without stores, without provisions? Lee's corps will also go to the southward. I believe it will be found very useful. The corps itself is an excellent one, and the officer at the head of it has great resources of genius."—*Washington to John Mathews*, 23 October, 1780.

I suppose that General Heath, if not already at West Point, is on his way from Rhode Island. I write to him to take the command of the post. If he is with you, you will be pleased to communicate to him your instructions with respect to it, and any other matters you may judge it material for him to know. If he is not arrived, General McDougall will command till he comes; to whom I also write for the purpose, and to whom you will make the communications I have requested, which he will transfer to General Heath.

I have only to add, that I wish your earliest arrival, that there may be no circumstances to retard your proceeding to the Southward, and that the command may be attended with the most interesting good consequences to the States, and the highest honor to yourself. I am, dear Sir, &c. * * *[1]

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, PASSAIC FALLS,
15 October, 1780.

SIR,

I have been honored with your Excellency's favors of the 6th and 9th instant, with the Acts and papers to which they refer. The first did not reach me till the 13th in the Evening.

[1] "I am aware, that the command you are entering upon will be attended with peculiar difficulties and embarrassments; but the confidence I have in your abilities, which determined me to choose you for it, assures me, you will do every thing the means in your power will permit to surmount them and stop the progress of the evils, which have befallen and still menace the Southern

I shall in obedience to the orders of Congress take the proper steps for a Court of Inquiry to be held on the Conduct of Major-Genl. Gates as Commander of the Southern Army; and also shall, agreeable to their direction, appoint an officer to command in his room, untill such inquiry be made. Major-General Greene, who is at present at West Point, is the officer I shall nominate. I am sorry to find, by the Copies transmitted in your Excellency's letter of the 9th, that our Affairs at the Southward are in so deranged a state. I see not how we are to supply the defect of Cloathing and Arms, except those, which have been long expected from France, should speedily arrive.

I inclose your Excellency a New York paper of the 11th which contains nothing material, except Arnold's address to the inhabitants of America. I am at a loss which to admire most, the confidence of Arnold in publishing it, or the folly of the Enemy in supposing that a production signed by so infamous a Character will have any weight with the people of these States, or any influence upon our Affairs abroad. Our accounts from New York respecting the intended embarkation continue vague and contradictory. A few days ago it was said, that the troops designed for the expedition were all on board and that the Fleet

States. You may depend upon all the support I can give you, from the double motives of regard to you personally, and to the public good.

"I wish circumstances could be made to correspond with your wishes to spend a little time at home previous to your setting out; but your presence with your command, as soon as possible, is indispensable. The embarkation at New York sailed the 16th, in all probability, destined to co-operate with Cornwallis, who, by the last advices, was advanced as far as Charlotte. I hope to see you without delay, and that your health will be no obstacle to your commencing your journey."—*Washington to Major-General Greene*, 18 October, 1780.

would sail immediately. I last night received intelligence, tho' not thro' a direct Channel, that the troops were again disembarked, and that a plan intirely new was in agitation. Unluckily the person in whom I have the greatest confidence is afraid to take any measure for communicating with me just at this time, as he is apprehensive that Arnold may possibly have some knowledge of the connexion, and may have him watched. But as he is assured, that Arnold has not the most distant hint of him, I expect soon to hear from him as usual.

I have, in my several late letters to Govr. Jefferson, mentioned the preparations in New York, and have advised him to have all public Stores removed from the navigable Waters, lest the expedition should really, as they industriously propagate, be destined for Virginia. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO PRESIDENT REED.

HEAD-QUARTERS, PASSAIC FALLS,
18 October, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

By your favor of the third from Bethlehem, I perceive my letter of the 1st had not got to your hands; but I have the pleasure to find, that the business you were upon anticipated the purposes of it, and was in a fair way to answer the end.[2]

[1] Read in Congress, 19th October.

[2] General Washington had written, requesting President Reed to cause to be sent forward as expeditiously as possible a supply of flour to the army.

Arnold's conduct is so villanously perfidious, that there are are no terms that can describe the baseness of his heart. That overruling Providence, which has so often and so remarkably interposed in our favor, never manifested itself more conspicuously than in the timely discovery of his horrid intention to surrender the Post and Garrison of West Point into the hands of the Enemy. I confine my remark to this single act of perfidy; for I am far from thinking he intended to hazard a defeat of this important object, by combining another with it, altho' there were circumstances which led to a contrary belief. The confidence and folly, which has marked the subsequent conduct of this man, are of a piece with his villany; and all three are perfect in their kind. The interest you take in my supposed escape, and the manner in which you speak of it, claim my thanks as much as if he really had intended to involve my fate with that of the Garrison, and I consider it as a fresh instance of your affectionate regard for me.

As I do not recollect ever to have held any very particular conversation with General Schuyler respecting Arnold, I should be glad to obtain a copy of the Letter in which you say my "opinion and confidence in him (Arnold) is conveyed in terms of affection and approbation." Some time before or after Arnold's return from Connecticut (the conversation made so little impression on me, that I know not which), General Schuyler informed me, that he had received a letter from Arnold, intimating his intention of join-

ing the army, and rendering such services as his leg would permit, adding that he was incapable of active service, but could discharge the duties of a stationary command without much inconvenience or uneasiness to his leg. I answered, that, as we had a prospect of an active and vigorous campaign, I should be glad of General Arnold's aid and assistance, but saw little prospect of his obtaining such a command as appeared to be the object of his wishes, because it was my intention to draw my whole force into the field, when we were in circumstances to commence our operations against New York, leaving even West Point to the care of Invalids, and a small Garrison of Militia ; but if, after this previous declaration, the command of that Post, for the reasons he assigned, would be more convenient and agreeable to him than a command in the field, I should readily endulge him, having had it hinted to me, by a very respectable character, a member of Congress [1] (not Genl. Schuyler), that a measure of this kind would not be unacceptable to the State most immediately interested in the welfare and safety of the Post.

This, to the best of my knowledge and recollection, is every syllable that ever passed between General Schuyler and me respecting Arnold, or any of his concerns. The manner and the matter appeared perfectly uninteresting to both of us at the time. He seemed to have no other view in communicating the thing, than because he was requested to do it, and my answer, dictated by circumstances, you already

[1] Robert R. Livingston. See above p. 326.

have; but how it was communicated, the letter will show.[1]

That this Gentln. (Genl. Schuyler) possesses a share of my regard and confidence, I shall readily acknowledge. A pretty long acquaintance with him, an opinion of his abilities, his intimate knowedge of our circumstances, his candor as far as I have had opportunities of forming a judgment of it, added to personal civilities and proofs of a warm friendship, which I never had a doubt of, would leave me without excuse, were I to withhold these from him. What ascendency he may have over the army is more than I can tell; but I should not be surprised if he stands in a favorable point of view with respect to their esteem. The means he took to acquire a true knowledge of their distresses while he was with it, the representations he made to procure relief, and his evident endeavors

[1] "Your favor of the 15th is just come to hand. I cannot suffer myself to delay a moment in pronouncing, if Arnold, by the words (in his letter to his wife), 'I am treated with the greatest politeness by General Washington and the officers of the army, who bitterly execrate Mr. Reed and the Council for their villanous attempt to injure me,' meant to comprehend me in the latter part of the expression, that he asserted an absolute falsehood. It was at no time my inclination, much less my intention, to become a party in his cause; and I certainly could not be so lost to my own character, as to become a partisan at the moment I was called upon *officially* to bring him to tryal. I am not less mistaken, if he has not extended the former part of the paragraph a *little* too far. True it is, he *self*-invited some civilities I never meant to shew him, (or any officer in arrest), and he received rebuke before I could convince him of the impropriety of his entering upon a justification of his conduct in my presence, and for bestowing such illiberal abuse as he seemed disposed to do upon those whom he denominated his persecutors. Although you have done me the justice to disbelieve Arnold's assertion to his wife, a regard to my own feelings and character claims a declaration of the falsehood of it, from, dear Sir, your most obedient and affectionate, &c."—*Washington to President Reed*, 20 November, 1780.

to promote the objects for which he was appointed, seems to have made this a natural consequence. That part of your letter which respects the exchange of prisoners will be made the subject of a particular letter—and shall accompany this. I am, dear Sir, &c.

CIRCULAR TO STATES.

HEAD-QUARTERS, PASSAIC FALLS,
18 October, 1780.

SIR,—

In obedience to the orders of Congress, I have the honor to transmit you the present state of the troops of your line, by which you will perceive how few men you will have left after the first of January next. When I inform you also, that the regiments of the other lines will be in general as much reduced as yours, you will be able to judge how exceedingly weak the army will be at that period, and how essential it is the States should make the most vigorous exertions to replace the discharged men as early as possible.

Congress are now preparing a plan for a new establishment of their army, which, when finished, they will transmit to the several States with requisitions for their respective quotas. I have no doubt it will be a primary object with them to have the levies for the war, and this appears to me, a point so interesting to our independence, that I cannot forbear entering into the motives which ought to determine the States without hesitation or alternative to take their measures decisively for that object.

I am religiously persuaded, that the duration of the war, and the greatest part of the misfortunes and perplexities we have hitherto experienced are chiefly to be attributed to the system of temporary enlistments. Had we in the commencement raised an army for the war, such as was within the reach of the abilities of these States to raise and maintain, we should not have suffered those military checks which have so frequently shaken our cause,

nor should we have incurred such enormous expenditures as have destroyed our paper currency, and with it all public credit. A moderate compact force on a permanent establishment, capable of acquiring the discipline essential to military operations, would have been able to make head against the enemy without comparison better than the throngs of militia, which at certain periods have been, not in the field, but in their way to and from the field; for from that want of perseverance which characterizes all militia, and of that coercion which cannot be exercised upon them, it has always been found impracticable to detain the greatest part of them in service, even for the term for which they have been called out, and this has been commonly so short, that we have had a great proportion of the time two sets of men to feed and pay, one coming to the army, and the other going from it. From this circumstance, and from the extraordinary waste and consumption of provisions, stores, camp equipage, arms, clothes, and every other article incident to irregular troops, it is easy to conceive what an immense increase of public expense has been produced from this source, of which I am speaking. I might add the diminution of our agriculture, by calling off at critical seasons the laborers employed in it, as has happened in instances without number.

In the enumeration of articles wasted, I mentioned clothes. It may be objected that the terms of engagement of the levies do not include this, but if we want service from the men, particularly in the cold season, we are obliged to supply them notwithstanding, and they leave us before the clothes are half worn out.

But there are evils still more striking that have befallen us. The intervals, between the dismission of one army and the collection of another, have more than once threatened us with ruin, which humanly speaking, nothing but the supineness or folly of the enemy could have saved us from. How did our cause totter at the close of '76, when with little more than two thousand men we were driven before the enemy through Jersey, and obliged to take post on the other side of the Delaware, to make a shew of covering Philadelphia, while in reality nothing was more easy to them, with a little enterprise and industry, than to make their passage good to that city, and dissipate the remaining force which

still kept alive our expiring opposition? What hindered them from dispersing our little army and giving a fatal blow to our affairs during all the subsequent winter,—instead of remaining in a state of torpid inactivity, and permitting us to hover about their quarters when we had scarcely troops sufficient to mount the ordinary guards? After having lost two battles and Philadelphia in the following campaign for want of those numbers and that degree of discipline, which we might have acquired by permanent force in the first instance, in what a cruel and perilous situation did we again find ourselves in the winter of '77, at Valley Forge, within a day's march of the enemy, with a little more than a third of their strength, unable to defend our position, or retreat from it, for want of the means of transportation? What but the fluctuation of our army enabled the enemy to detach so boldly to the southward in '78 and '79, to take possession of two States, Georgia and South Carolina, while we were obliged here to be idle spectators of their weakness, set at defiance by a garrison of six thousand regular troops, accessible every where by a bridge which nature had formed, but of which we were unable to take advantage from still greater weakness, apprehensive even for our own safety? How did the same garrison insult the main army of these States the ensuing spring and threaten the destruction of all our baggage and stores, saved by a good countenance more than by an ability to defend them? And what will be our situation this winter, our army by the first of January diminished to a little more than a sufficient garrison for West Point, the enemy at full liberty to ravage the country wherever they please, and, leaving a handful of men at New-York, to undertake expeditions for the reduction of other States, which for want of adequate means of defence, will, it is much to be dreaded, add to the number of their conquests, and to the examples of our want of energy and wisdom?

The loss of Canada to the Union and the fate of the brave Montgomery, compelled to a rash attempt by the immediate prospect of being left without troops, might be enumerated in the catalogue of evils that have sprung from this fruitful source.

We not only incur these dangers and suffer these losses for want of a constant force equal to our exigences, but while we labor under this impediment it is impossible there can ever be

any order or economy or system in our finances. If we meet any severe blow, the great exertions which the moment requires to stop the progress of the misfortune, oblige us to depart from general principles, to run into any expence, or to adopt any expedient, however injurious on a large scale, to procure the force and means which the present emergency demands. Every thing is thrown into confusion, and the measures taken to remedy the immediate evils, perpetuate others. The same is the case if particular conjunctures invite us to offensive operations; we find ourselves unprepared, without troops, without magazines, and with little time to provide them. We are obliged to force our resources by the most burthensome methods to answer the end, and after all, it is but half answered; the design is announced by the occasional effort, and the enemy have it in their power to counteract and elude the blow. The prices of every thing, men, provisions, &c., are raised to a height to which the revenues of no government, much less ours, would suffice. It is impossible the people can endure the excesive burthen of bounties for annual drafts and substitutes increasing at every new experiment; whatever it might cost them once for all to procure men for the war, would be a cheap bargain.

I am convinced our system of temporary enlistments has prolonged the war, and encouraged the enemy to persevere. Baffled while we had an enemy in the field, they have been constantly looking forward to the period of its reduction, as the period to our opposition and the season of their successes. They have flattered themselves with more than the event has justified; for they believed when one army expired, we should not be able to raise another; undeceived however in this expectation by experience, they still remain convinced, and to me evidently on good grounds, that we must ultimately sink under a system which increases our expense beyond calculation, enfeebles all our measures, affords the most inviting opportunities to the enemy, and wearies and disgusts the people. This has doubtless had great influence in preventing their coming to terms and will continue to operate in the same way. The debates on the ministerial side have frequently manifested the operation of this motive, and it must in the nature of things have had great weight.

The interposition of neutral powers may lead to a negociation

this winter. Nothing will tend so much to make the court of London reasonable as the prospect of a permanent army in this country, and a spirit of exertion to support it.

'Tis time we should get rid of an error, which the experience of all mankind has exploded, and which our own experience has dearly taught us to reject—the carrying on a war with militia, or, (which is nearly the same thing) temporary levies, against a regular, permanent and disciplined force. The idea is chimerical, and that we have so long persisted in it, is a reflection on the judgment of a nation so enlightened as we are, as well as a strong proof of the empire of prejudice over reason. If we continue in the infatuation, we shall deserve to lose the object we are contending for.

America has been almost amused out of her liberties. We have frequently heard the behavior of the militia extolled upon one and another occasion, by men who judge only from the surface, by men who had particular views in misrepresenting, by visionary men whose credulity easily swallowed every vague story in support of a favorite hypothesis. I solemnly declare, I never was witness to a single instance that can countenance an opinion of militia or raw troops being fit for the real business of fighting. I have found them useful as light parties to skirmish in the woods, but incapable of making or sustaining a serious attack. This firmness is only acquired by habit of discipline and service. I mean not to detract from the merit of the militia—their zeal and spirit upon a variety of occasions have entitled them to the highest applause ; but it is of the greatest importance we should learn to estimate them rightly. We may expect every thing from ours that militia is capable of, but we must not expect from any, services for which regulars alone are fit. The late battle of Camden is a melancholy comment upon this doctrine. The militia fled at the first fire, and left the continental troops surrounded on every side and overpowered by numbers, to combat for safety instead of victory. The enemy themselves have witnessed to their valor.

An ill effect of short enlistments which I have not yet taken notice of, is that the constant fluctuation of their men is one of the sources of disgust to the officers. Just when, by great trou-

ble, fatigue, and vexation, (with which the training of recruits is attended,) they have brought their men to some kind of order, they have the mortification to see them go home, and to know that the drudgery is to recommence the next campaign. In regiments so constituted, an officer has neither satisfaction nor credit in his command.

Every motive which can arise from a consideration of our circumstances, either in a domestic or foreign point of view, calls upon us to abandon temporary expedients and substitute something durable, systematic, and substantial. This applies as well to our civil administration as to our military establishment. It is as necessary to give Congress, the common head, sufficient powers to direct the common forces, as it is to raise an army for the war; but I should go out of my province to expatiate on civil affairs. I cannot forbear adding a few more remarks.

Our finances are in an alarming state of derangement. Public credit is almost arrived at its last stage. The people begin to be dissatisfied with the feeble mode of conducting the war, and with the ineffectual burthens imposed upon them, which though light in comparison with what other nations feel, are from their novelty heavy to them. They lose their confidence in government apace. The army is not only dwindling into nothing, but the discontent of the officers as well as the men have matured to a degree that threatens but too general a renunciation of the service, at the end of the campaign. Since January last, we have had registered at Head Quarters, more than one hundred and sixty resignations, besides a number of others that never were regularly reported. I speak of the army in this quarter. We have frequently in the course of the campaign, experienced an extremity of want. Our officers are in general indecently defective in clothing—our men are almost naked, totally unprepared for the inclemency of the approaching season. We have no magazines for the winter —the mode of procuring our supplies is precarious, and all the reports of the officers employed in collecting them are gloomy.

These circumstances conspire to show the necessity of immediately adopting a plan that will give more energy to government, more vigor and more satisfaction to the army. Without it we

have every thing to fear. I am persuaded of the sufficiency of our resources if properly directed.

Should the requisitions of Congress by any accident not arrive before the legislature is about to rise, I beg to recommend that a plan be devised, which is likely to be effectual, for raising the men that will be required for the war, leaving it to the executive to apply it to the quota which Congress will fix. I flatter myself, however, the requisition will arrive in time.

The present crisis of our affairs appears to me so serious as to call upon me as a good citizen to offer my sentiments freely for the safety of the republic.

I hope the motive will excuse the liberty I have taken.

I have the honor, &c.

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